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## GOLDEN.

BY E. NORMAN GUNNISON.

Oh, young and fair!  
Oh, sweet and rare!  
The sun went past the hedges,  
And rested on the horizon dim,  
And touched with gold its edges.  
Through purple bars  
The light of stars  
Came down—the sunset over—  
And softened with their mellow rays  
The fields of new-mown clover.  
On toward the lane  
The loaded wain  
Came creaking through the meadow;  
Now touched with light—and then again  
One-half concealed by shadow.  
Along the hill  
The night-bird's trill  
Came laden down with sweetness,  
The tints of gray across the sky  
Made up the scene's completeness.  
Just by the hedge,  
Across whose edge  
Her hair hung burnished golden,  
A maiden listened to her swain  
Repeat the story olden.  
The old, old tale:  
The serpent's trail  
Can never, never cover:  
Since Mother Eve came on this earth  
Each maid has had her lover.  
And so they stood,  
While over wood  
And vale the night-shades darkened;  
And as the midnight grew apace,  
The angels paused and hearkened.  
Oh, heart of youth!  
Oh, heart of truth!  
Taking love's all—and giving:  
With your untaught philosophy  
Pointing the truth o' living.  
In coming days  
When life's strange maze  
Your feet may tread together  
Ye may not find its pathways trend  
Through fields of blooming heather.  
The warp and woof  
Of life, forsooth  
Some dark threads twine in weaving;  
The hand that guides the shuttle's course  
May test your soul's believing.  
But when life's page  
Marks for you—age,  
And silver threads with golden,  
Still other lives beside the hedge  
Shall tell the story olden.

## The Beautiful Forger:

OR,  
THE ADVENTURES OF A YOUNG GIRL.

BY MRS. E. F. ELLETT,  
AUTHOR OF "MADAME SLOMAN," ETC., ETC.

### CHAPTER IV.

#### THE DISSOLVING REVELATION.

DR. MERLE was convinced by the report of his assistant of the evil intentions of his disguised visitor. But he was puzzled how to prevent the intended crime. He could not denounce her to the authorities without proof, and that he could not furnish beyond his own word and conjecture. He could only try to work on her fears by presenting himself in the character which popular superstition ascribed to him; that of a magician possessing powers beyond ordinary human knowledge.

Anticipating a second visit, he made his assistant, who was a capital draughtsman, prepare a sketch from memory of the scene he had witnessed the preceding night. This was completed in a couple of hours; all but the lady's face. Her strange eyes had so bewildered Ulric that he had not taken careful note of her features. The sick man's face, the bed and table; the toilet, and figure of Louise, and the expression of fright upon her face, were accurately portrayed.

Merle was busy all the morning arranging his apparatus to produce an illusory scene.

In the afternoon a lady was announced by the housekeeper. Dr. Merle showed her into the study himself. When she removed her veil, strange features were disclosed.

She came, however, from the doctor's visitor of the preceding evening. The vial of medicine, she said, had been accidentally broken, and she had been sent for more.

The doctor asked if the patient had taken any, and what its effect had been.

She believed he had taken some, and it had sent him into a quiet sleep. So her mistress had told her.

"Was he asleep at the time of the accident?"

"I think so, sir."

"Now, look you, my good woman," observed the physician, sternly regarding her; "I know exactly what took place at that time. Take a seat, and I will show you."

He fastened a sheet across the lower end of the room.

"Now, look at the picture that will presently appear."

A pale glimmer, like lamplight, began to appear on the sheet. In a few minutes the entire scene of the previous night was reproduced.



He threw himself on the ground at the lady's feet, removed his hat, and looked up in her face.

All was just as you have seen it, when the bottle was broken. You can not deceive me!"

The girl's hands were clasped and unclasped in the extremity of terror. "Oh, sir," she exclaimed, "I did not mean to deceive you! But my mistress—"

"Nor can she deceive me, in any thing," said the doctor, emphatically. "Go, now; and tell Mrs. Paul Sloman she must come herself for the medicine. I will give it only to her."

He waved his hand in dismissal.

The young woman, still trembling, turned to leave the room. She had hardly reached the entrance, when the front door was opened for some one.

It was a man scarcely yet of middle age, habited as a priest. The garb of a minister of the church was in those days more distinctive and picturesque than now. His eyes met those of the departing visitor for an instant; but Dr. Merle was close behind her, and while a cordial greeting was exchanged between the two men, the girl, hastily wrapping her cloak about her, walked rapidly from the house.

When she reached a shaded spot among some trees at a little distance, she stopped her almost flight, threw herself on the ground, and covered her face with her hands.

She did not hear the rustling of footsteps, nor see the figure slowly approaching. When she heard her name pronounced softly by some one close to her, she started, and looked up. Then she gave a low shriek, and sprang to her feet.

"You know me?" asked the priest; for it was he who had followed her.

"Antoine!" she gasped.

"Sit down, Louise, on this log. You are pale and trembling! Are you not glad to see me?"

"Oh, Antoine!"

"Father Hamill, you must call me. We are no longer as we were in Provence, five years ago, Louise."

"Five years!" echoed the girl, catching her breath like a sob.

"And then you and I loved each other, Louise; but poverty separated us. Now all is changed. My home is still a poor one, but I am vowed to the service of the church, and am sent here as a missionary."

"How did you know where I—?" began the girl, recovering her composure.

"I knew nothing till I saw you at Dr. Merle's."

"I knew you at once, Antoine."

"You must call me Father Hamill. Tell me now, Louise, what you have done since we parted?"

The girl looked down as she replied: "When I lost my home by my aunt's death, I entered the service of a young married lady—Madame Sloman."

"Had she not led a wild life in Paris?"

"She was but young when she married; and she came with Mr. Sloman to America."

"Bringing you?"

"Yes; I was her maid. I had not a franc for my own support. I was obliged to enter a service."

"You were the daughter of honest parents, Louise, and should have chosen the association of those in good repute."

"Madame made me excellent offers, Antoine—I beg pardon—Father Hamill—and her husband is a worthy man."

"It is said, Louise, that the house of Madame Sloman is the resort of suspicious characters."

"I do not believe, Father Hamill, that she means to do wrong. She is ambitious, and must have subordinates to work out her plans."

"Louise, you are a faithful daughter of the church?"

"Surely, Father—"

"I wish you to leave this lady's service."

"And starve? Or beg for a living?"

"Neither, my daughter. Where can I see you to-morrow—to-morrow about dusk?"

Louise hesitated, and then said she would be at that hour in the lane half a mile from Sloman's house.

"I will see you then, and give you counsel," said the priest. "Perhaps I may help you to employment. I shall not rest till you are settled as you ought to be. Good-by, now."

He spread out his hands, as if in benediction, over the girl's head, without touching her, and then turned back. Louise watched him till he was out of sight, and then went and unfurnished her horse.

Toward sunset, next day, Mrs. Paul Sloman again visited Dr. Merle's house, as commanded by the physician. She rode, as was the custom both for men and women; carriages being a luxury afterward introduced into common use; but she was attired as became a lady of condition. She wore a riding habit of dark-green cloth, fitting closely her tall figure of exquisite symmetry. A hat of the same color, made of rich velvet and adorned with a single long plume, rested on her head over a braided mass of raven hair. There was a rich color in her olive cheek, and her magnificent eyes were gloriously bright.

She had laughed to scorn the tale brought her by her frightened attendant. The idea of magic—of a scene produced by supernatural means; of a pretended knowledge by Dr. Merle of the secrets of her house! Such pretenses might terrify a stupid serving-woman, but could not impose upon her! As she rode fearlessly to the doctor's door, she resolved to teach the presuming *medicastro* his duty, and the danger of impertinent interference with those higher in station than himself.

Ulric saw her as she alighted, but took pains not to show himself. It was important she should not recognize in the doctor's assistant the spy who had been secreted in her chamber. He hurried in to give Margaret notice, and went to call his master, who had gone to the little hamlet a couple of miles or so distant.

Margaret informed her young mistress that she was asked for, and in a few minutes Helen came into the parlor.

Mrs. Sloman gave her own name, and said she had called as much to see Miss Merle as her father. She was surprised in her own mind to find a maiden so refined and lovely in so poor a house. She talked with the girl, and found her cultivated as well as beautiful. With all the tact she possessed, she strove to interest Helen in her conversation, and succeeded so well, that by the time Dr. Merle arrived, the two ladies were engaged in an animated colloquy as if they had been long acquainted with each other.

Dr. Merle's face clouded as he saw how matters stood. He greeted his visitor coldly, and desired her to walk into his study, without asking his daughter to accompany her.

"You must come to see me, dear, very soon," said the lady, graciously, as she pressed Helen's hand. "Take this visit to yourself, and be sure that you return it."

The doctor frowned, and muttered a negative. He showed the lady into his sanctum with ceremonious deference, and requested her to be seated.

She commenced by laughingly describing the alarm and confusion of her maid at the scene that had been shown her, and asked if it could be seen by herself. She was curious about natural magic, though she had no belief in diabolical agency. There were demons enough in human form for the Prince of Evil to work out his designs with," she said, with a meaning smile.

Dr. Merle fully agreed with her. He replied that he would show her the scene, but refused to answer any of her questions.

The lady took her seat as directed; the sheet was put up, and the study darkened. The scene of the morning was again exhibited. Mrs. Sloman was startled, but she had been prepared for something extraordinary, and had self-control enough not to betray any agitation. She called attention to the fact that her own face was scarcely seen in the picture.

"That can be remedied," said the doctor, gravely, as the picture faded from view.

"Remain here, if you please, madame, and fix your eyes on this round hole in the wall. Afterward I will cast your horoscope."

The lady obeyed his directions, and sat silent and motionless, for some time after Dr. Merle had left the study. By means of mirrors and lenses, a reflection of her face had been thrown on a scene in the adjoining apartment, prepared for oil painting. Ulric was busy sketching the face and putting in the coloring.

It was complete in a few moments, and was a striking likeness. The doctor returned to his study, and showed the portrait to his voluntary sitter.

"This time she was surprised and angry. 'This is no work of magic,' she said. 'You have had my portrait taken while I sat there. What is your object? What do you mean by this? I gave you no leave. Bring it in and give it to me!'"

"Pardon me; I can not part with it," demanded she, fiercely.

"What do you mean to do with it?"

"That depends on circumstances."

"I will not permit you to keep a portrait of me obtained by stratagem."

"You cannot help it, madame. Do not vex yourself needlessly. It depends on your own conduct whether any use is ever made of the portrait; any use which you would not like."

"On my conduct! This is strange language, sir."

"Would you like me to cast your horoscope, now, madame?" asked the doctor.

"Silence!" cried his visitor. "I do not believe in your power to read the future, any more than in your magical pretensions. You may impose on ignorant valets—not on me! Once more, I command you to bring that portrait."

"Once more I refuse."

"You dare to defy me?"

"I dare, madame, for you are wholly unmasked. You came to me at first to obtain medicine to work out a foul purpose. I penetrated your mystery, and gave you what would have done no harm, had you administered it to him you wished to destroy. By means I shall never explain, I obtained knowledge of what passed after you left my house. I am fully aware of your plans, and intend to defeat them. You are under the observation of those interested to preserve the peace and safety of the community, and to interfere when it appears that crime is meditated or committed."

"You are bold, sir," muttered the lady, growing deathly white as her white teeth gleamed in a strange smile.

"I am bold in the cause of justice and right. Be you thankful that you are saved from the commission of further wickedness. Your reputation even now is not free from suspicion. Guard it more carefully in future."

"You shall repent this. This—and your sending a spy after me!" his visitor muttered; but she made no further remarks. She gathered up her skirt and quitted the house, without an adieu.

Like a spirit of evil intent on a work of destruction, she sped on her way home.



ward. Her handsome face was dark with passion, her little form was instinct with the strength born of it. There was determination in her compressed mouth, and a dangerous flash in her eyes.

Dusk had fallen as she reached the lane turning off from the main road by which she was going to her own house. She let her horse moderate his pace, and rode on through the shadows that now fell darkly across the path.

It was yet light enough to see figures; and as she gained a bit of rising ground, two persons appeared, partly in relief against the sky, partly lost in the shade. One she immediately recognized as that of her attendant, Louise. "Whom could she be talking with?"

The man's figure was close to her; speaking, it appeared, confidentially. Now the girl clasped both her hands and looked upward, as if making some promise or vow. Then his hands were stretched toward her, as in farewell or benediction, and in a moment he turned away and disappeared.

#### CHAPTER V. THE WELCOME GUEST.

OLIVIA SLOMAN urged her horse forward, and as the distance rapidly lessened between her and the girl's figure, she caught sight of another masculine form advancing toward the girl. It was a tall, large-framed man, of majestic bearing. A keen pang of jealousy shot through Olivia's soul. "What can he have to say to her? Does she meet him in secret?"

The conference between the new-comer and Louise had continued but a minute or two ere Olivia had dashed up to them. She gave a merry laugh, as if pleased to have startled them, but did not fail to notice that Louise looked confused and guilty.

The girl caught the look her mistress flung at her, and hung her head, turning away.

"Mrs. Sloman! I am fortunate not to miss you!" cried the gentleman she had called Victor Ormsley, as he came with outstretched hands to greet her. The transformation on Olivia's face was remarkable. She smiled graciously; her eyes sparkled, and she gave the gentleman a jubilant welcome.

"You were on the way to my house?" she said.

"I have just been there, Mrs. Sloman."

"You are formal, sir."

"Olivia, then—since you permit me to call you so, I have called to say good-by, perhaps for a few weeks."

"Good-by! Why, where are you going?"

"I have to go East on some business, and may not return in a month or two, though I may in a few days. I am very glad to see you; I would not have missed you for a great deal. I have seen Paul, and I hope he is beginning to grow better."

"You may go on to the house, Louise," said the lady; "and stay, take my horse; I will walk the rest of the way."

She leaped from the horse and gave the bride to the girl, with another searching look. Louise took the bride and went on, leading the animal.

"You had not been long speaking with her?" she asked of the gentleman, when the girl was out of sight.

"Only a moment," he answered.

"Then who was it in such earnest conversation with her before I came up?"

"I do not know. I did not see any one."

"No—he had left her. He went when he heard you coming. It is strange; she does not know any one in this part of the country."

"Perhaps she has a 'follower'?" suggested the gentleman, with a smile.

"No—she has no lovers; I would not permit it."

"You should extend to her the same indulgence, Olivia, that you required when—"

"No, I have seen the folly of such doings. And one never knows with whom one is acquainted, in this lawless region."

"True; you are right to be cautious."

"I have no confidence in any one, Victor, but yourself."

"And in Paul," he added, musingly.

"Oh, Paul can do nothing; he is ill all ways. I have to nurse him and take care of him, and he can not take care of me. I trust only in you, Victor." She put her arm within his, as they walked along slowly toward the house.

"You do me honor. I am sorry I can do so little."

"But you have done a great deal. What should we have done without your help; your advances on the mortgages; you have been so generous. We might have starved outright."

"Not a word more! It would be very strange if I should not help Paul a little. We have long been such friends."

"And me—do you not care for me, too, a little?" pleaded the lady, insinuatingly, slightly pressing the arm she held, and looking up into his face with appealing earnestness.

"Certainly; you and Paul both! You know that, Olivia."

Her manner suddenly changed.

"I have a favor to ask of you, Victor," she said, eagerly.

"What is it? You may be sure of anything I can do."

"Let me have the keys of your large warehouse by the river, while you are gone."

"I will. I have them in my saddle-bags in your stable."

"And let no one else come near the place but myself, while I have them, without first coming to me."

"You shall have full sway. You may sell all the grain and iron stored there, if you like."

"I shall do nothing of the kind. But if I want to keep any thing securely myself, the place will be convenient. Are the doors and windows safe?"

"Every window is barred heavily with iron, and the doors are massive and secured by strong bolts. You may defy burglars; no one can get in."

"Or get out, either?" asked Mrs. Sloman.

"Or get out, once inside. The place was a prison in former years; and it has dusty corridors and cells where an army of war captives might be stowed away."

"Who has charge of the building?"

"Old Larry Sterne, the fisherman who lives in the cabin a short distance down the river. He keeps the keys, as a rule, and he always sees to the packing of stores when they come up."

"There is a wharf near, where the boats land?"

"Close to the walls. But I do not expect any more boat-loads at present. You must

use all the produce you want—and don't be afraid of waste."

"How kind you are," she whispered, and again the light pressure on his arm.

"I only wish Paul could go with me," he answered.

They had reached the house, and the lady urged her companion to come in. Supper would soon be ready. She showed him into a parlor, handsomely furnished for the time and locality; well-furnished, indeed, for a more civilized region. There were a piano and guitar, books, music and a few small paintings; there were sofas and lounges; and the carpet was of new and rich pattern. The man-servant had come in from the stable, and he lighted a lamp on a table in the center of the room. Mr. Ormsley took a chair, and looked over some old newspapers, while the lady of the house went to change her riding-dress.

She came in, wearing a fine merino of rich brown color, with white collar and cuffs. Her hair lay in heavy braids coiled around her head, without ornament. Only a brooch of fine-wrought gold incensing a single blood-red ruby, fastened the white linen at her throat, and two or three brilliant sparkled on her small white fingers. Her style of dress was subdued; yet nothing could hide the coquettish grace with which she wore it, nor the dark beauty of her face. It was a singular face, full of impetuous expression one moment, impassive and impenetrable the next; it seemed as if an invisible mask were drawn over it at will. There was the luxuriance of a tropical flower in the splendor of her complexion, the vivid contrast of her abundant raven hair, and the paleness of her broad, low forehead. The large black eyes, under straight, thick eyebrows, and shaded by lashes long enough to touch her cheek, looked like springs suddenly revealed under clustering bushes; and they were as unfathomable as those springs shadowed by midnight.

She had glided stealthily into the room, and stood close by Mr. Ormsley, as he was looking over the papers attentively. A glance at him will not be amiss, as he is of some importance to our story.

A tall and stalwart form, a dress of rich material, made in the style then peculiar to gentlemen of the better class, and massive features cast in a grand and noble mold, gave him an air of distinction. He evidently did not belong to this section of country. His complexion was browned by travel and exposure; his hair was grizzled, but he did not seem more than forty years of age. His face bore the deep lines of care or trouble, and it was easy to see that some painful recollection at nearly all times weighed on his spirits.

"How is Paul, now?" he asked, without looking up, as he heard the rustle of Olivia's dress.

"He is better; he will see you again presently; after supper," was her answer.

"But, Victor, I want to ask you something. Is David Ormsley—your brother—still living at your rancho—the hacienda?"

"Yes—course; he and his family."

"They will remain there all winter?"

"I hope so; I should be sorry to find them gone. The property is not mine; he purchased it to live here. He has landed interests to keep him."

"And you—to whom the other land belongs—"

"Only part of it; and David holds the rest for me. I am a wife, Olivia; I come and go like the wandering wind. The same chance or hope that brought me here, may send me any day to the opposite side of the globe."

"When will you learn to give up visionary schemes?"

"When I have lost strength, means, or the hope of opportunity to make amends for wrong!"

"You have no clew—yet?"

"None. I only know how deeply I sinned; and that no reparation is possible! I deserve all I have suffered! Olivia, pray that you may be called to bear crushing misfortune—no rather than remorse and self-reproach."

"You are too tender of conscience."

"Paul, your husband, first opened my eyes; and for that I owe him everlasting gratitude."

"But he told you nothing! He knew nothing!" cried Olivia, recoiling a step, with her white lips strangely distorted.

"He was rational! I was mad! My best, truest friend! A life's devotion could not repay him."

"Too sentimental!" muttered the lady, in a low, sneering tone. Ormsley looked at her quickly.

She hastened to apologize, and added: "Was it the part of a friend to inflict torture upon you?"

She put her hand on the back of his chair, and leaned over him tenderly.

"The torture was merited. My want of faith made me a victim. I have but to bear the fate I drew on myself."

"Drew on yourself?" echoed the clear voice, incredulously.

"Why speak so? What do you dare to insinuate?" exclaimed Ormsley, turning upon her, his brow contracted with a frown, his eyes flashing.

Olivia saw she had offended him.

"Oh, Victor, pray, pray forgive me! I am so confused—How long is it since my husband deceived you, as you said?"

"Twelve years."

"Six years before he married me."

"He had kept the letter two years before he had an opportunity of showing it to me."

"And after he convinced you, you set out—"

"To do what I could in reparation! I have not succeeded; yet, I do not abandon the hope of success."

"And that brought you to California?"

"In part only. I came on my brother's account. It was well I had some one to care for, or I should have gone mad."

"And some one to lavish your money upon?"

"I have done little for David, for he had a competence."

"To have some one to care for! Victor, have you never cared for me?"

She stooped lower, and her hand rested, not on the chair, but on his shoulder. "Did he feel that there was danger in the close neighborhood of those magnetic eyes, now filled with softness, and seeking his own?"

He rose, apologized for being seated while she stood, and drew forward an easy-chair for her.

"Care for you and Paul? Surely, Olivia," he cried, cheerily. "You know that I do. Did not his advice bring me here?"

"And since we came—since Paul fell ill," she said, in a low, gentle tone, "you have been so kind to us!"

"Olivia, have I not begged you never to speak of kindness from me?"

"But I must remember it!" she said, earnestly. "Victor, grant me one favor."

"Certainly; what is it?"

"I have enemies here; I have always had enemies. I have made an unscrupulous one within two hours' ride."

"Who is it?"

"I will not tell you his name; but he is my bitter foe. Promise me not to be prejudiced against me by any stories that may be brought to you."

"How can you think I would be?"

"Men are always ready to take away a woman's good name! Remember how it was about—"

"No need to remind me of that!" cried Ormsley, while a spasm of sharp pain convulsed his features.

"Be forbearing with me! Oh, Victor—should people—should any one—try to blacken my name—"

"I assure you, Olivia, I will listen to no tales against you!"

"I could not live if you thought evil of me! And, Victor—dear Victor—I implore you—give me another promise. I wronged you once; you would hate me if you knew what I did! Say that you will forgive me, if you ever find it out!"

Her words gushed forth with passionate force; she flung herself on her knees before him; she clasped his hand in both her own, which were cold as ice itself.

"You speak riddles, Olivia!" he exclaimed, in astonishment. "How did you ever do me wrong?"

"I did; but may I die the moment you discover it! Promise me your pardon, Victor. It is the secret of my life! Promise me your full pardon!"

It was in almost supplication that her eyes were raised to his. He lifted her from the floor, and placed her in the seat.

"It can not have been great harm," he said, in a light tone, "since I know nothing of it. Be at ease; you shall have full forgiveness. Do not weep! See, here is Gilbert to say supper is ready. Then I will go to Paul's room."

Olivia's attachment to this man had been the cord that held her back from perdition. Could it draw her into the sunlight of virtue? We shall see.

#### CHAPTER VI. THE BANDIT LOVER.

VICTOR ORMSLEY rode away from the house of his friend, Paul Sloman, believing his wife to be a true-hearted woman. He could not see beneath the smiling surface, and discover the scheming wickedness hidden under so fair an exterior.

"Now, come to me, Louise," the lady called, to her maid, as soon as she heard her guest's horse galloping away. "Sit down here, and tell me who it was you were talking with in the lane, just before he came up."

"Indeed, madame—"

"No shirking or shuffling! A man was speaking to you. I saw you both distinctly. It seemed to be saying something particular."

"The girl's face was averted."

"It was Father Hamill," she said.

"The Catholic priest of the rancho?"

"I believe so, madame."

"I did not know you were acquainted with him, or with any other priest."

"I did not know he was one, before I met him by chance in that house, where you sent me for the medicine yesterday."

"Mr. Merle's?"

"Yes, madame."

"You saw him there for the first time? How came you to be so intimate, when I saw you together this evening? Tell me the truth, Louise."

"I will, Mrs. Sloman, for the truth is best," answered the girl, speaking with more courage. "I knew Antoine Hamill many years ago in Provence."

"Ah!"

"Yes; it was before he was a priest. He was only a poor farmer's son."

"And he courted you, Louise?"

"How quick you are to read things, madame!"

"It was so, then?"

"Yes, madame; we were attached to each other."

"What parted you?"

"We were both so very poor. His father sent him away; and I did not see him again."

"Then he became a priest?"

"He was sent to study for one; and when he was able, they sent him here as a missionary."

"Well; and you have renewed your love vows?"

"How can you ask such a question!" exclaimed Louise, impatiently. "Do you not know that a priest can not marry?"

"I had forgotten that."

"Antoine—Father Hamill, is nothing to me."

"Then why do you meet him again?"

"He said he had something to say to me."

"What was it?"

"He wanted to—give me some advice."

"He wished you to leave my service, was not that it?"

Louise looked up astonished. How could the lady discover every thing?

"Was not that his advice? You do not deny it."

"He thought it would be better—"

"I understand it all. You can do as you please. I can spare you very well, Louise."

Again the look of astonishment.

"You have had a good home with me, Louise, and I am not likely to be poorer than we have been. I have the prospect of being much richer. But if you wish, you can leave me. I do not want a spy on my actions."

"A spy, madame! I have never been a spy."

"Nor a judge?"

"I never presumed to judge you."

"Listen to me. The doctor has ordered Paul to go and live on the seaboard. He will soon go to the city, and Peter will attend him."

"You are not going?"

"Not for the present. Some one must see to our affairs here. If you choose to remain with me, you may either stay here, or go with Paul as housekeeper."

"I could not do that, madam."

"Then stay here if you like; but I will have no meetings with that young priest, who dares to censure what I do."

"I shall not see him again."

"That is well. Will you stay, then?"

"I have nowhere else to go," sobbed the girl, covering her face with her hands in conceal her tears.

"Then stay if you like; but do not pre-

sume to question what I do. I have to manage every thing here, and I have to see many persons your priest might not approve. Just do as I bid you and be faithful and silent. You understand?"

"Yes, madame."

"Go, then, and sit in my chamber, to be within call when Paul wakes, and to give him his medicine. I expect to meet a friend—I am going out, and you must see that no one follows me. Take the light."

What could the girl do? Disobey her spiritual adviser she must; was she not driven by necessity?

She went to take her place in the room next to that of the invalid. Her mistress threw on her cloak and fur-lined cap, and went out. Her walk was a long one, and in the opposite direction to the horse-path she had taken through the lane. It led across the plain, by a circuitous route toward a dense piece of woods, at the base of a precipitous bluff.

On the face of a steep pile of rocks was a cavernous opening, called a "pocket," almost entirely concealed by a thick growth of bushes. In the mouth of this a fire was kindled, over which was a frying-pan, half-filled with pork and sea-biscuit stewed—a favorite dish at that period among rangers of the forest. A pot of coffee stood on one side. A man seemed to be superintending preparations for supper. He was unshaven and rudely dressed in loose trousers and long boots, with red flannel undershirt and a sombrero. He started when he saw the approaching figure, then turned toward a thicket, where stood a gray horse just fastened to a sapling by his rider.

This rider had a poncho thrown over his shoulder, where a heavy rifle was slung, and his legs were incased in skins garrisoned with Mexican spurs. He wore a low-crowned, broad-brimmed hat, and a dark cloth jacket, with blue military trousers and scarlet sash. His features were heavy and his complexion swarthy; his straight black hair hung over a projecting forehead, and his eyes, though small and piercing, were intensely black.

He turned when the other man spoke to him, and advanced to meet the lady. She allowed him to take her hand and lead her a little apart, under the shelter of a large tree, where he flung his cloak over a stone, and motioned her to take the seat.

"I will bring you some coffee," he said.

"You need not. I have taken supper. Who is with you?"

"Only Pedro and the Indian lad. They are out of hearing."

He threw himself on the ground at the lady's feet, removed his hat, and looked up in her face with a pleased expression.

"I am so happy to see you again, Olivia. I hope you have good news?"

"That is as you take it," she answered.

"I have found it impossible to do as you proposed. I can not go with you. I must stay here."

His face darkened with disappointment.

"You must not be angry, Queredos. I can do more for you here."

"I will not go without you, my pearl, my star of beauty! What do I care for money or plunder, unless I can have you?"

He took the hand that lay on her lap and lifted it to his lips.

"Don't be a fool. You must go; and the sooner you finish the business, the sooner we can meet again."

"Our retreat would be a desert without the queen. You know, Olivia, I would as willingly be in the mines again, as chief of this band, if I can not have your help. What has prevented the success of our scheme?"

"Accident, partly; then there is too much risk. I have sent out two more of the securities. Paul is ordered by the doctor to the seaboard; he will be out of the way; and can not dispute his signatures, you know. Look here."

She showed the keys Ormsley had given her.

"What are those?"

"The keys of Victor Ormsley's warehouse. He left them in my keeping. He is gone East."

"Do you want the stores transferred?"

"No. You have been helped too often from them, and so have I. Do you think I want to rob a man who is so kind he gives me all for the asking?"

"Olivia, I hate that man."

"You are jealous, Queredos."

"I know it. I own it. He is more of a gentleman than I am, and he is wealthy. His wife could queen it without the help of bandits or Spanish grants of land. You may play me false some day; and, then, look out for my revenge."

"Pshaw, I can be no man's wife; you know that. Why can you not be reasonable?"

"Because I love you, Olivia; and I have never heard you say you love me."

"No more of that. I want a real service of you."

"Ah, yes; you come to Queredos when you want work done," said the man, sullenly.

"Listen: we are in danger; you as well as I. An enemy has started up, who must be put down before he can do us mischief."



glancing at her from the corners of his eyes, while the smile on his face became a grin.

"I did not say it was a proposition," Helene answered, frowning slightly.

She was sounding him cautiously, and she had placed a golden inducement before the man whose nature she hardly knew yet.

Pedro at once assumed a sober countenance.

"What would I do, my lady? Well, if the offer came from one whose eyes were dark as yours, and whose voice said three thousand dollars, it is possible—"

"Ah, I think I know you, Pedro Gomez!"

He inclined his shaggy head.

"Then you will aid me? You will strike this enemy from my path? For, I will do even more, if you make no mistake. I will sign a document agreeing to give you half my fortune, after fifteen years have elapsed."

He opened his eyes in amazement.

"Or, further," she added, earnestly, "if that does not altogether suit you, I will give you your choice, between half my fortune and my hand in marriage—after fifteen years."

Pedro Gomez stared. He felt his veins warming, and the words of the beautiful girl tingled in his ears.

He was completely deceived by her tone. He believed that it might be possible for him, one day, to possess this lovely creature. While it seemed preposterous, it filled him with rapture.

"Lady," he stammered, "I will do anything you command!"

"It is well. My enemy is to be removed."

"And I will remove her for you?" exclaimed Pedro, whose gaze was still swimming, whose ears were still tingling.

She arose and went to the desk on the small table, from which she obtained a tiny vial.

While she was doing this, Pedro was thinking:

"She is not an angel!—she is all devil! But she is beautiful! I am in love with her—I, Pedro Gomez, the dirty gardener! And if I live for fifteen years—she will be my wife, for she has promised to put such an agreement upon paper. Ho! ho! what good luck. And three thousand dollars in cash money! I am rich! I am happy! I will obey her in anything!"

He was interrupted by Helene, who approached him.

"You see this vial, Pedro Gomez?"

"Yes."

"It contains a deadly poison."

"Yes."

"The way to administer it is by putting three drops—only three drops—in the center of a rose."

"In the center of a rose," he repeated, paying close attention, and receiving the poisonous vial from her.

"The one who smells of the rose will, at the first inhalation, give a quick start, and look surprised. At the second—which can not be resisted—the effect is to produce drowsiness. Then there must be somebody to grasp and sustain the stricken one, who will be likely to fall, and press the rose close to the nostrils—remember, press the rose close to the nostrils! Can you recollect?"

"Yes, my lady; I have it by heart. But there is danger in all this."

"None. The cause of death can never be traced to the rose. Will you perform the task properly?"

"It shall be done," promised Gomez.

"Swear it!"

"I swear it shall be done!" vowed the Spaniard, sinking to one knee and raising one hand.

"When will you do it?"

"Within one week."

"You do solemnly swear, that, within one week, you will administer poison to my enemy, through the rose?"

"Yes."

"Then you will earn more money by it in one day than you can make with the spade in five years. When it is done I will hear of it without your telling me. Come to me afterward, and you shall have three thousand dollars."

"I think I can trust her," flashed through his mind. "And—by the devil!—if she fooled me, I would make her repent it! But no, she dare not trifle with me. And so beautiful! And, perhaps, after fifteen years, she will be the wife of Pedro Gomez! Excellent fortune! What a rise, from a poor gardener, to the position of a gentleman and the husband of this devil-of-an-angel!"

"Well, Pedro Gomez?" interrogatively, and cutting short his grand painting of mind-pictures.

"Yes, my lady. I was only thinking how generous of you to honor me so—to honor the poor gardener!"

Her red lips curled, and she gazed down on the uncouth form; but he did not see it, for he was bowing lower, and shaking his head from side to side while speaking.

"Get up, Pedro."

"Yes, my lady," and inwardly: "What a sweet voice! If she is ever my wife, she shall sing me to sleep every night!"

Plainly we see that the hint of becoming his wife was a cunning artifice, for he was thoroughly deluded, and ready to do whatever Helene Cerey might wish.

The beauty had other intentions for the future of Gomez, while she played a part now that made him plant in her hands.

"But, lady,"—as he suddenly struck him that the most important part of his instructions had been omitted—"who is it I am to remove from your path, with the deadly rose?"

"Her name is Florose Earncliffe," and as she uttered the name, she fastened her dark orbs in a hard, hard-frowning gaze upon his face.

Pedro started back. The vial nearly fell from his clasp, and his swarthy face grew red.

"Lady!"

"Not a word! You have sworn to remove my enemy. That enemy is your young mistress, Florose. Remember your oath! Remember the three thousand dollars!"

"And the beautiful devil who may some day be my wife!" added Pedro, in his own mind, trying, himself, to set aside the scruples which had arisen at mention of Florose.

And between Helene Cerey and himself, he easily quelled any weak feelings that might have possessed him.

Ten minutes later, he left the house.

And Helene Cerey was walking back and forth in her boudoir, smiling in triumph as she pondered on the oath of Gomez to remove her rival.

## CHAPTER VII.

CARLOS MENDOZE, THE QUACK.

NIGHT.

Eight o'clock.

With the last stroke of the iron tongue that proclaimed the hour, a carriage rolled away from before the residence of Helene Cerey.

Going from her house, we are right in supposing that its occupant was the plotting, dark-eyed belle.

While she is speeding away, we turn to another locality, to an establishment near the corner of Willow and — streets.

It was a dilapidated affair; a dingy little store, with one bow window, the frame of which was sunken and rickety, and the contents of which was composed of countless bottles of various sizes, bearing numerous labels of dusty condition. One miserably-spluttering lamp shed a sickly glimmer over the suspicious-looking bottles; and a row of monstrous candles on a shelf inside, served to display the stock of Carlos Mendoze, the Quack.

There were several customers in the store; and old Carlos—a Spaniard, of many years, with pointed features, slim body, of short stature, and wearing a long black ministerial frock-coat—was bowing and bending while he served their wants, and occasionally speaking words of advice.

As the withered old Quack attended to these customers, a carriage whirled past the door—stopping a short distance beyond. In a moment it rumbled on again; and in another moment a new customer entered the store.

Carlos Mendoze. This last was a woman, closely veiled, and attired very plainly.

She did not stop at the counter, but passed straight on, disappearing through a narrow back door.

"Ah!" thought old Carlos, as he gave a momentary glance after the comer; "there is the beautiful belle! She comes again to see Mendoze, the Quack. What does she want this time? I shall learn presently, when she comes. Will they never begone?"

Carlos Mendoze was very anxious to join the visitor who awaited him in the back room. But the customers in his shop annoyed him greatly by standing and talking after they had made their purchases.

When, however, the last one had departed, he made haste to close and lock the door.

Now then!—now then, for my hundred-dollar customer! rubbing his skinny hands together and hurrying toward the back room.

Helene Cerey was seated at a large round table, apparently impatient at his long delay.

"Ah!" he squeaked, "I am sorry you had to wait so long, madam."

We state here that Helene was a wealthy orphan. Also, that it was a habit with Mendoze to call her "madam," for their acquaintance was, by no means, a fresh one.

"I thought you would keep me all night, Carlos Mendoze!"

"Oh, no; not even if I had to drive those ragged buyers off by force. But I am here now; how can I serve Madam Helene Cerey this time?"

"I have found use for the poison I got of you yesterday."

"Ah!" smiling grimly.

"Now I want something else."

"Something else? What is that something else?"

"An asp, Carlos Mendoze—an asp with a poisoned fang!"

"Ho! ho!" exclaimed the Quack, within himself, "she wants an asp! What is she going to do with an asp?" Then aloud: "How did you know I could give you an asp, eh?"

"You are forgetful. I learned it from your own mouth. When I asked you yesterday for poison, you suggested an asp. But I preferred the means of the deadly rose. Now, give me an asp; and, also, give me a drug to produce instant stupor—a drowsiness in which the asp can be applied."

"But these things are very precious," whined old Carlos. "My asps are quite expensive."

"What do they cost?"

"The price is two hundred dollars."

"Bring me one, then; and make haste. Make up the drug, too. I must get away from here. The smell of your bottles sickens me."

The shriveled old Quack started to procure what she wanted—lighting a candle, and descending to the cellar, where he kept the horrible things. And as he went, he was muttering:

"So young, and so beautiful! Yet she is a deep one, for she uses drugs and poisons. Ah! I know what you are at, Helene Cerey. You mean to poison Florose Earncliffe, your rival! You shall pay old Carlos much more money, yet, to keep your secret. I know—I know all about it. You can't conceal it from me! I have my thumb on others, rich as you. But the asp? What can she want with the asp? I will find that out, too."

It was some time before he returned.

He brought her a very small, round box, containing what she desired, and, in a few words, instructed her how to use it.

Next, he compounded the drug for her. And in half an hour, Helene Cerey left the shop. Her carriage had returned; and when she had entered this, and was being borne homeward, Carlos Mendoze stood looking after her—tightly clutching the two hundred and fifty dollars she had paid him.

As the Quack was about to retire from the doorway, a figure approached rapidly, ascended the steps, brushed rudely against him, and passed into the shop.

"Ho! Cortez—you are drunk! Malediction!" he snarled.

"No—malediction!—I am not drunk!" snarled back the figure, continuing on to the rear apartment, and banging the narrow door spitefully.

"Something is the matter with Cortez!" the Quack exclaimed, a little nervously, as he hastened after this new-comer.

In the rear office stood Cortez Mendoze, the son of Carlos. But Cortez, then, was a youth hardly twenty-two years of age.

He was handsomely proportioned; with an attractive face, brilliant eyes, and skin of extraordinary purity—the more extraordinary, because Cortez was addicted to habits of dissipation. There was evidence of great muscular strength in him; and a bearing that showed he well knew of his attractiveness.

On this occasion, his face was glowing as

if with angry emotion, and he was grinding his fine white teeth savagely.

"Malediction!" cried Carlos. "What is it, my boy? You are mad!"

"Yes, I am mad—malediction!" hissed the handsome Cortez—using, it will be seen, the favorite exclamation of his father.

"Be calm, my dear Cortez—be calm. Sit down, and tell me what has happened."

Cortez sat down; but he instantly started up and began striding across the apartment, with clenched fists and scowling brow.

Carlos rung a tiny bell that was upon the table.

The summons brought a negro, who appeared at another door which led to the upper story of the rickety building.

"Bring us some wine, Farak," he said; "and be quick about it."

And when the negro had gone for the wine:

"Sit down, Cortez, my dear boy; tell me what's the matter."

"Matter enough!" growled the young Spaniard. "You know Wart Gomez?"

"Oh, Wart Gomez! the son who quarreled with his father, Pedro, on account of Carlina Mandoro!"

"Yes—he who married Carlina Mandoro. Malediction!"

"Your old sweetheart."

"Yes."

"But what of Wart Gomez?"

"We quarreled, three days ago."

"Ho! A quarrel with Wart Gomez! Well?"

"He met me on the street, and dealt me a blow in the face, because, he said, I had spoken slanderously of his wife, Carlina."

"Wart Gomez struck you in the face? Carlina?"

"Yes—Carlina!" echoed Cortez, with a hiss, and a snap of his teeth.

"Well? Well? What then?"

The father now partook of the excitement of the son.

At that moment Farak brought the wine. When the negro withdrew, Carlos persuaded his son to a seat.

"Now, then, my dear Cortez. What did you do when Wart Gomez struck you?"

"I struck back again!" gulping down a glassful of wine.

"Good! Good!" squeaked the father, rubbing his skinny hands till the knuckles cracked, and seeming highly pleased.

"A challenge followed. He was to have met me to-night, at sunset, to fight with pistols."

"Yes—yes. And you would have shot him?"

"But he did not come! Malediction!" shouted Cortez, smiting the table with his fist.

"Ho! how cowardly!"

"Indeed, he sent this note. Read it." He threw a slip of paper toward his father; and the latter read as follows:

"CORTAZ MENDOZE: I shall not meet you. For two reasons, I will not fight you: first, I have a wife and child who depend upon my labor; second, you are not worthy of my anger. WART GOMEZ."

"The coward!" exclaimed Carlos.

"But he shall not escape me! I will have his life! He struck me, and now tries to sneak from the penalty. The blow on my cheek still smart. Malediction!"

"Yes—malediction!" accepted Carlos, refilling the tumblers. "Since he will not fight you fairly, you must have revenge!"

"And I will have it! Carlina!"

"Carlina!—yes."

## CHAPTER VIII.

A STRANGE HISTORY.

In a western section of the city was situated the house of Wart Gomez, the son of Pedro.

There was a vast difference between father and son. The young Gomez was a man of many accomplishments, acquired by himself, and which had obtained him, first, a clerkship at a handsome salary, and, afterward, a position with his employers that was almost a partnership.

In consequence of steady habits, and close attention to business, the young man had saved a great deal of money, and was very comfortable in this world's goods.

He married a beautiful girl, whose name was Carlina Mandoro; and the result of this marriage was a quarrel with his father, Pedro Gomez, which led to a separation between them.

Carlina's father was a Spaniard—her mother an Englishwoman; and they were well to do, if not rich. It was because of this that Pedro objected to the union, declaring that she was too far above Gomez to become his wife—the wife of a son of a gardener.

But Wart was ambitious; and he stood high in the esteem and confidence of his employers. He won the girl's affections—while she was living at a hotel, with her widowed mother—and married her.

The pair were well-mated, for they loved each other fondly.

It was the third night after that on which Helene Cerey visited Mendoze, the quack.

In the parlor of Wart Gomez' snug house, husband and wife and child were assembled—the latter, a girl, four years and three months old. And Zetta, the servant—who was about Carlina's own age—was amusing the child, while her master and mistress conversed.

On this evening Carlina appeared to be very uneasy. Her eyes glanced restlessly about; her voice was unsteady; and Gomez missed the sunny smile with which she was wont to welcome him, when he returned to his home at nightfall.

"Carlina," he said, "you are too sad to-night. You are anxious without good cause. Come—look up and smile; and think no more of Cortez Mendoze. We need not fear him."

"I can not drive off the feeling, Wart," was the despondent return. "I am trembling in a dread of something terrible that is about to happen."

"Why should you?"

"Cortez Mendoze will never forgive you the blow you struck him."

"I could not help it, Carlina! The scoundrel was heard to boast, in a wine-shop, that you had once been his sweetheart."

"And was it not true, Wart?" with a shudder.

"Ay, but he deceived you—deceived your mother! He came to you, dressed in fine clothes, and with pretty speeches. He said he was rich; and I proved to you that he lied—he was poor, an adventurer, and no fit companion for one so pure as Carlina Mandoro. My blood boiled when I heard of his language, so I struck him for his baseness."

"And I fear he will seek some terrible revenge; for he is very passionate. I can not rest easy, dear Wart."

"Pah! Forget him."

"And then, to-day, when I was dusting my bureau—you know the box containing the Star of Diamonds?"

"Yes; in the top drawer."

"I opened the drawer, to put away some trifles, when the lid of the box flew wide, with a loud 'click!'"

"Well?"

"It is nothing—the jar of opening the drawer, perhaps."

"I could not help but feel that it foretold some great calamity."

"Po!"

"For, Wart," her voice sunk low, and she turned her pale face earnestly to his, "it flew open in the same way just before my mother's mother died."

"Ah! yes; now I remember, you promised to tell me all concerning this mysterious star, and the fates attached to it. It has a strange history, you say?"

"Yes—very strange. I will tell you. And then you can see that I am not uselessly worried by its box-lid flying open in my face. And doing so at a time when we have a deadly enemy in Cortez Mendoze, and after you have had a quarrel with him, I have cause to think there is danger hovering near. Oh, Wart! What is coming?"

And she buried her face in her hands, as if the dread that had fastened upon her was momentarily increasing.

"But, this strange history, Carlina? shifting his position nervously. 'Tell me, now, about this Star of Diamonds?'"

Zetta, the maid, and Zuelo, the little girl, were silent and attentive, too, as Carlina began to explain the mystery and fates of the Star of Diamonds. Even the child was impressed by the solemn tone in which her mother spoke.

And while a brief silence ensued upon the last speech of Wart Gomez, there was a face peering in at the open window—the face of a man, with an expression that was scowling, angry, ominous.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 154.)

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"I opened the drawer, to put away some trifles, when the lid of the box flew wide, with a loud 'click!'"

"Well?"

"It is nothing—the jar of opening the drawer, perhaps."

"I could not help but feel that it foretold some great calamity."

"Po!"

"For, Wart," her voice sunk low, and she turned her pale face earnestly to his, "it flew open in the same way just before my mother's mother died."

"Ah! yes; now I remember, you promised to tell me all



## Saturday Journal

Published every Monday morning at nine o'clock.

NEW YORK, MARCH 8, 1873.

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BY BARTLEY T. CAMPBELL.

For those readers and households that "read, mark and inwardly digest" what is best in current literature, the successive issues of the "Star" Journal must be a weekly feast. No paper published in America ever presented more varied, entertaining and markedly original matter.

THE reader has a new treat in store, for we have from Mr. Whittaker's hand a sea and shore romance, which, in several particulars, is one of the most captivating stories that has yet fallen from his delightful pen. It is

### THE SEA CAT;

OR,

The Witch of Darien.

A STORY OF THE BUCANERS.

In which Morgan, the celebrated Sea Rover and enemy of the Spaniards, plays out an episode in his astonishing career that is literally enthralling as a narration. It may be anticipated with all curiosity and interest, for it will fully answer, in its exciting and thrilling narrative, any expectancy formed.

### Our Arm-Chair.

Chat.—The *Prairie Chief* says to its readers: "Those of our people who wish an entertaining and instructive paper should subscribe immediately for the SATURDAY JOURNAL."

Just what a great number of readers are doing. One pleasing feature of the JOURNAL is that it goes so largely in homes and families. A good family paper by no means implies one that is filled up with recipes for pies and puddings, rules of conduct, essays on education, etc., etc. On the contrary, a real family and fireside journal is the hardest kind of a weekly to get up, for the reason that its interest must be so varied as to reach and satisfy the old and young equally; it must be grave and gay; it must have matter that will command attention for its novelty, freshness and entertaining nature; it must be well prepared, well illustrated, well printed on good paper. All this the SATURDAY JOURNAL aims to accomplish; and its steadily increasing circulation through the mails is the best of evidences that it is doing not only well for itself but well for the homes of America, for which it caters.

In answer to the inquiry of a correspondent who lost a valuable manuscript by the confiscation of all matter only partially paid in postage, we say, the authority for such procedure is assumed to lie in the following sections of the Postal law:

SECTION 151. That all mail matter deposited for mailing, on which at least one full rate of postage has been paid as required by law, shall be forwarded to its destination, charged with the unpaid rate, to be collected on delivery.

SECTION 152. That if any mail matter, on which by law the postage is required to be prepaid at the mailing office, shall by inadvertence reach its destination without such prepayment, then the prepaid rates shall be charged and collected on delivery.

It would indeed puzzle a "Philadelphia lawyer" to extract from these provisions a right to impose a triple postage, and, failing to receive it of the person to whom the package is addressed, to confiscate the package and send it to the Dead Letter office. Thousands of dollars' worth of manuscripts have so been made way with, for which the Government ought to be held responsible. The law requires no exposition to defend it from this outrageous invasion of property right. It says, as plain as words can say it, that all matter on which even one rate has been prepaid shall be duly forwarded to its destination, and the still unpaid rate duly collected on delivery. But, it adds, if by any reason a package gets into the mail having nothing prepaid on it, then collect double rates on delivery. That is all. We have little confidence in an officer who can so read this law as to extract from it the right to levy triple rates, and to confiscate all manuscripts and correspondence which refuses to submit to the extortion—very little confidence indeed. And in this matter we speak the mind of every editor and publisher in New York city, we are sure.

A late report from Washington says: "According to the reports of the Internal Revenue office, the number of distilleries in operation on the 1st inst., was 311, with a daily producing capacity of 278,619 gallons, being a daily increase during January over December of 38,921 gallons. What a horrible showing is this! Every gallon of that liquor represents crime, suffering, death; and yet, month by month we witness a steady increase

in the amount manufactured. It is "blood money" indeed that comes from its taxation. We are literally "peopling Hell" when we in any way encourage this traffic in liquor. "A daily producing capacity of 278,619—over one hundred million gallons per year! Are we to become a nation of drunkards?"

The destruction of buffalo on our Western plains is something sad to contemplate. Great slaughter was made during the last four months of last year. One firm in Leavenworth received 30,000 hides per month, while two others in Kansas City received 15,000 each in the same time. This is at the rate of 2,000 slain per day. The immense piles of stacks of hides to be seen at all the stations along the line of the Kansas Pacific Railroad bear witness to the slaughter. Prof. Mudge (of Manhattan, Kansas), who is well posted in the economy of the plains, places the number killed per day at 1,000, which is sufficiently high to insure the early extinction of the species. Must this slaughter continue? Congress, it seems to us, might interfere to prevent the destruction of the race as it has interfered in Alaska to prevent the destruction of seals.

### Foolscap Papers.

#### Whitehorn's Dinner Speech.

From the London Times.

THE public dinner given to Mr. Whitehorn on the occasion of his last visit to England was a great success. Many great and effective speeches were made by prominent men. Mr. Carlisle said he knew the moment that Mr. Whitehorn landed on the British shore that it was *him*, for he had felt the island shake. He was pleased to see him.

Mr. Tom Hues said every one in his parish knew Whitehorn was here, as all the milk turned sour on a sudden. He was glad to welcome him.

Dr. Darwin said it did him more good to see Whitehorn than it would to see one of his original grandfathers who were monkey monks. He was proud of the moment.

The Marcus of Boot said he knew Mr. Whitehorn was in the kingdom, for he had seen the frogs out on his farm turning handsprings. He was overjoyed to meet him.

Hon. Madstone knew Whitehorn had come when one of the dog-irons in his fireplace began to bark. This was the proud hour of his life.

John Bright said he was happier on this occasion than at any other moment since he invented his celebrated disease. "His joy was complete."

Martin Farquhar Tupper felt like he could write another book of Proverbial Hydropics standing on his head.

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Mr. Whitehorn then arose.

Mr. Chairman and gentlemen: the distinguished honor you have done me this evening fully comes up to my expectations, and on behalf of the people of the United States I thank you for this good dinner you have been so kind to prepare for me. Were it not for the momentous affairs which must soon call me back to the land of liberty and the home of the eagle, I should dearly love to stay and board with you. The name of England is associated with all that is high and pure in literature and philosophy, but I did not believe she had such good cooks before. I came here this evening a stranger and awful hungry, and my table sauce comes on my head.

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I began my life very early; the Roman empire had declined, and the greatness of the Caesars had long before become a matter of history; but, never have I had such a deserved reception and such fine English herring as I have had here this evening. (Cheers.) I might say, illustrious chairman and gentlemen, that in consequence of the failure of a remittance from my proud home in the setting sun, from the sale of a wagon load of pumpkins, I am out of funds, but I scorn to allude to it, for I know the generosity of the English pocket-book. (Cries of "here, here," though nobody offered any thing.) I might lengthen my speech by continuing on, but, gentlemen, you all have what is termed, in poetry, corn, and know how to sympathize with me. God bless you all; and now, as I sit down amid waving of handkerchiefs, let the band strike up "Hail Columbus."

### Woman's World.

A Death-bed Utterance.—Eloise's Diamonds.—A Diamond Palace.—How to buy Diamonds.—What I Know About Diamonds.—A Regret, and an Utterance.

THE following words are recorded as the death-bed utterance of a truly good and noble woman—one whose whole life was known as a martyrdom to duty.

"I have made a great mistake in life. I have tyrannized over my tastes and my natural instincts. I have walked in the rugged ways of duty so carefully that I would not permit myself to admit that the same Hand that made the rugged also made the smooth, and that He had made the beautiful far more abundant and common than the unsightly. Now I perceive, when it is too late, that had I made myself more attractive to the eyes of those for whom I wrought, I should have gotten nearer to them, and have been able to show them the loveliness of purity, instead of making it appear so rigidly cold. It is too late now, but you will tell women for me, to be fair to the eyes of those they would better, for God intended it. I see my mistake now; I have worn the sackcloth when I should have been as beautiful as the truth I was giving to my children. Had I won them to love me, I should not have been deserted by this supreme moment of dissolution. Tell women to be unselfish. Tell them to be useful. Tell them to be beautiful."

I often wonder why all who feel and see that they have made mistakes in life do not give utterance to the regret as this woman did. Such utterances would be indelible footprints in the sand of time, to warn the misguided, and direct our forlorn and shipwrecked brothers and sisters, "sailing off" life's solemn main," how to take heart again, and steer their shattered barks into safer, and happier havens of happiness.

Not long since a friend of mine—a beautiful woman—sent me a note, saying: "Come to me immediately—come, for I need your counsel and assistance." I could not imagine what was the matter. I had left her but twenty-four hours ago in fine health and spirits. I knew her husband was considered one of the most prosperous and enterprising men of New York. I hastened to comply with her request, and upon arriving at the house, was shown at once to Eloise's dressing-room. She looked nervous and anxious, but not miserable. She began at once:

"I will not ask you to take off your hat and cloak, because I am going to ask you to go on an errand for me. I can not go myself, as you will see when I explain. My dear E—, don't be shocked, but it is a fact—my husband is on the eve of bankruptcy. He told me this morning that if he could not raise ten thousand dollars by three o'clock to-morrow, his credit in bank and elsewhere would be gone, and in a month of affairs, it would be impossible for him to obtain a third of the amount. Now, my friend, my jewels are my only resource; but if I go to pawn them, everybody will know me, and the affair will give such a blow to Harry's credit that, even if he weathers this storm, his business reputation will suffer fearfully, and perhaps irretrievably. You can take my diamonds and pearls for me, though, and raise all the money you can, and never let it be known whose jewels they are. In a month Harry can redeem them. Am I not right? Say yes," she cried, impatiently. "I know you think so."

"You are more than right," I answered; "and now I see your good mother's good sense and forethought in advising your father to invest some of the fortune he gave you, on your marriage, in the form of jewels. You could not raise money so quickly and privately on real estate; and stocks would have to be sold. Let us look at your diamonds."

She opened her boudoir-dresser and displayed its glittering treasures. A cross with nine large solitaires first caught my eye. As I raised it from its velvet cushion, "That," said Eloise, "cost nine thousand dollars. Each diamond is worth a thousand."

"You can raise five thousand on that," I said.

"Only five thousand?"

"Yes, only five thousand. You must remember the diamond broker knows the necessity for privacy any person has who brings him such jewels as these to raise money on."

"Very true," responded Eloise. "What could we raise on these earrings?"

I counted the diamonds. Two large solitaires and nine small brilliants in each earring.

"Perhaps five thousand more; but, to make it sure, send the brooch also. That must be worth as much more."

I took the brooch and the sapphire diamond ring also, to make assurance doubly sure, and let me know the result as soon as possible.

I did not waste a moment, but it was noon the next day before I returned to Eloise with the money and the pawnbroker's tickets. The carriage was at the door, and she was whirled off to Harry's office as fast as the white ponies could fly. Harry did not break, and in less than a month the diamonds were redeemed.

Now, I would not advise the father of every bride to invest all his surplus funds in diamonds for his daughter. Eloise was the child of a millionaire, and had but one brother. Diamonds were just the thing for her. She was beautiful, genial, social and domestic by nature, and could safely trust herself with the possession of fifty thousand dollars' worth of jewels, and she knew when to wear them, and how to wear them—ay, and to use them.

A judicious amount of money can always

be expended, by persons of ample means, in diamonds, pearls and other gems. Under adverse circumstances money can always be borrowed on them, and they do not fluctuate in their market value, as real estate stocks do. They are the most beautiful ornaments a woman can wear and are a guarantee of the wealth of the wearer; and it is a rather mortifying thing to confess of our civilization, but it is true, that an appearance of wealth and prosperity secures in no country in the world so much respect as in our republic!

In selecting diamonds it is well to remember that the most "reliable" houses can not always be trusted. I knew a lady who,







"He's hiding in some corner, perhaps?" "There ain't a corner for him to get into," said the outlaw. "It runs right chuck into the rock. I was down hyer on't."

The pursuers went straight on; they had ceased to track the fugitive by his foot-steps in the sand, as it was plainly evident that he must have gone directly onward.

The passage was scarcely wide enough to permit two persons to walk abreast; it twisted first to the right and then to the left, and a hundred yards further on ended abruptly, the way barred by the impenetrable rock.

The outlaws paused in astonishment; they had not brought the fugitive to bay, as they had confidently expected.

"The devil seize him!" cried the chief, in a rage; "where can he have hidden himself?"

The road-agents gazed at each other with blank faces. The disappearance of Talbot was incomprehensible—any, miraculous.

"Perhaps he didn't come this way?" suggested one of the band, anxious to account for the strange event.

"Didn't we trace his footsteps in the sand?" cried Rob, angrily.

"Let us go back and track him carefully," suggested another.

A fine chance we'd have of tracking him now, by his footsteps in the sand, after we've trampled like a drove of wild horses over the trail," said Rob, sarcastically.

"I have it, cap'n!" cried one of the men. "He came as far as this and then turned back into the prison cave again."

"Perhaps so," answered Rob, thoughtfully; "but if he did do so, he can not escape us, for there is but one road from the prison chamber, and that leads directly to the council-hall; and even if he has got as far as that, he can go no further, for the rest of the band are in the outer chamber beyond."

Then they retraced their steps; but, though they searched carefully through the vaulted chamber, and even looked into the stony cell which had been designed for Talbot's coffin and tomb, no traces of the man could they find.

The rattlesnake, too, had disappeared; the reptile had retreated into some crevice of the rock, secure from observation.

The band returned to the council-chamber and there they found other members of the gang, so it was clear that the fugitive had not come that way.

The outlaw chief was indeed terribly enraged at the escape of Talbot, for now it was life against life!

"He must be within the cave somewhere," boys!" the chief exclaimed. "There must be no rest for us until we find him, or discover in what way he has contrived to avoid our search. I thought that every corner of the cave was known to us, but there must be some secret passage in the rocks which has escaped us. So, provide yourselves with candles, and some of you make torches of the pine boughs. We'll explore the passage again."

Aided by the lights, they searched high and low, but, as before, they found no trace of the fugitive—no secret passage in the rock.

"This man must be Satan or one of his imps," Rob cried, in anger, as the men gathered in the council-hall, after their fruitless search.

The brigand chief now dispatched three of his trustiest men to patrol the canyons near to the mouth of the cave.

The mind of the mountain brigand was very ill at ease. If Talbot succeeded in escaping, and bore away with him the secret of the cave and the means of entrance thereto, good-by to the safety of the stronghold of the road-agents! The mountain cavern would be more likely to prove their tomb, rather than their fortress.

And Talbot—keen-witted, strong-armed Injun Dick, strange blending of the iceberg and the volcano—how had he escaped from the toils of his terrible foes?

In blind haste, he had dashed onward in the darkness, not knowing whether the passage would lead, whether to freedom or to death.

The sharp rocks tore his outstretched hands until the red drops dripped from the white fingers; but onward he went—behind him, certain death; before him, uncertain chance.

Talbot felt that he could not keep up the terrible pace much longer; his breath was coming thick and fast, and the great sweat-drops rolled down his forehead, when, suddenly, both hands came in contact with the surface of the jagged rock, and the terrible knowledge that he had gone to the end of the passage flashed upon him in an instant.

With the quickness born of desperation, he tried the surface of the wall with his hands as high as he could reach, in hope to find some opening leading into another gallery like in nature to the first; but vain was the trial. He felt that he was caught like a rat in a trap. He had received but a respite, not a pardon.

Strong man though he was, Talbot groaned aloud in agony. Then to his ears came a distant sound. Full well he understood the meaning of that noise. The road-agents, alarmed by their confederate, were even now upon his track, with intent to drag him back to that damp tomb from whence the poisonous reptile had saved him.

The distant sound of the outlaws' tread resounded, hollow and dismal, among the arches of the vaulted passage, and grew more and more distinct as they came nearer and nearer.

Then the thought came to the mind of the hunted man that, perhaps, in the passage-way along which he had come there might be some crevice in the rock wherein he might hide, and thus for a while escape the search.

And so, while the road-agents paused for a moment by the side of their comrade, stricken down by the fangs of the rattlesnake, Talbot, with eager, trembling hands, sought along the wall on either side for a place of concealment. It was a fearful risk, for each step that Talbot took brought him nearer and nearer to the men who were hunting him down, thirsting for his blood.

"Heaven aid me!" cried the desperate man, in wild despair, as step after step brought him nearer and nearer to his enemies, and his hands fell only on the cold surface of the solid rock.

Ten short and feverish steps the fugitive takes; twenty times the jagged wall tears his nervous hands; then, with the curses and shouts of the outlaws ringing in his ears, as they again advance on the chase,

he catches his foot against a projecting rock and falls headlong to the ground. The fine sand cuts his face and chafes his mouth and nose; he heeds not that; he is conscious of one thing only; his right hand, extended sideways, strikes, not the solid rock, but empty air!

Oh, joy! Level with the ground, not a foot from his head, is a rounded cavity through which his body can pass.

He thinks not of what may be within—that, perhaps he comes uninvited to the home of the rattlesnake; that the coiled serpent may, even as he enters, be coiled in deadly folds ready to strike its fangs into his flesh; he thinks only that the foe is on his track, and while their feet are treading the sands of the gallery, and the flickering light of their candles pierces the gloom not ten paces from him, he drags himself through the cavity, and discovers that there is room for him to stand upright. He rises to his feet, and while, with oath and shout, the road-agents go trooping by, separated from him only by a foot of rock, with an exulting laugh he steps forward in the darkness. A single step only, and then the laugh turns to a cry of terror, for he has stepped into empty space, and wildly clutching at the air, he goes down, down into that awful pit.

## CHAPTER XIV.

JOHN RIMEE.

THE young stranger, who had called himself John Rimee, paid Shook for his breakfast and then left the house. Colonel Jacks, who had watched the young man intently while he was paying, followed him.

Rimee called to the hostler to bring out his horse. He evidently was ill at ease, and started with a nervous shiver when he turned and found the old soldier at his elbow, apparently watching him.

"A fine morning, sir," the colonel said.

"Yes, sir," returned the stranger. He did not like the scrutiny of the ex-officer, but a certain air of command—of dignity—in the ex-colonel's bearing, had its weight.

"A stranger to the Bar, I take it?" the colonel said.

"Yes," answered the stranger, just a little abruptly.

"I trust, sir, that you will pardon my questions," the soldier continued, with stately dignity, mingled with a hauteur that was natural to the man, a gentleman by birth and breeding.

"Oh, certainly," the young stranger said, impressed, in spite of himself, by the colonel's manner.

"I assure you, sir, that it is no idle curiosity. I question you, sir, because your face is strangely familiar to me. It recalls events which years ago shaped the whole current of my life."

The stranger listened attentively, and just a slight frown gathered on his brow. From under his long lashes he looked searchingly at the face of the colonel, as if he was striving to recall something from the past.

"I am sure, sir, that I shall be pleased to afford you any information in my power," the young man replied, after quite a pause. It was as if he had been deliberating what to say.

"If I may take the liberty to ask your name?" the colonel added. He was strangely agitated, and his usually cool gray eyes were snapping, and the pale lips were trembling under the short, bristly mustache.

"John Rimee," the old soldier repeated, slowly. He shook his head, thoughtfully. "That's not the name," he muttered to himself.

The young stranger did not hear the muttered sentence, but evidently guessed its meaning, for a lurid light shone in his dark eyes, and an ugly, scornful smile curled the corners of his parted lips.

"I beg your pardon again, but is your father living?" the colonel asked, raising his blood-shot eyes to the face of the young man.

"No, sir."

"Dead?"

"Yes, sir."

The colonel seemed bewildered; he had but repeated the question, yet he did not seem conscious of it.

"Dead—he dead and I live!" The soldier passed his hand vacantly across his forehead, then pulled the long ends of his mustache, which he wore after the French fashion. "It is not his name, and yet I am sure that it is *her* son; voice, eyes, hair, all alike," he murmured.

The young man waited patiently; there was a peculiar, half-hidden smile, which vanished when the old colonel looked him in the eye.

"Is—your mother living?" It cost the old man a throb of pain to put the question, though long years had come and gone since he had seen the woman to whom he guessed that his question referred.

"My mother died twenty-six years ago," replied the young man, slowly and distinctly; and while he spoke, his quick, black eyes never left the face of the colonel, and they seemed to rejoice when a look of pain appeared upon that face.

"Died twenty-six years ago!" the colonel muttered.

"Yes, sir, in France, where I was born." "France—twenty-six years ago. I was mistaken then," the colonel said, disappointed. "I really beg your pardon, sir; I perceive that you are not the person that I took you to be. I am sorry, sir, that I have troubled you with my questions, and I trust that you will excuse me. I am not quite so young as I once was."

With graceful dignity the old man delivered the explanation.

"Don't mention it, sir; I am sorry that I am not the person you sought." The young man spoke kindly. His horse was then brought, and he mounted and rode slowly away, while the old man watched him with a troubled expression upon his face.

"I can not understand it. I would not have believed that it is possible for any human being in this world, except her child, to possess that face. When I looked into his eyes, hers again rose up before me, soft in their melting tenderness, bright in their liquid fire. By Jove! I believe that I am in my second childhood! The voice, too; exactly the same; every tone alike!"

A gentle hand was laid upon the colonel's shoulder, which roused him from his abstractedness. He turned and beheld Doc Kidder, who had just come from the Water-proof saloon.

"Ah, Doc, is that you?"

"Yes; you seem all in a heap."

"Enough to make me, Doc," the colonel replied. "You remember the young man who rode up the street just before we went in to take our cocktails?"

"Yes; the young fellow with dark eyes that you said was the very image of your wife?"

"Precisely. Well, I've just had five minutes' conversation with him."

"Ah?"

"Yes; I could not resist the temptation to speak to him, for the likeness was so wonderful that I felt sure that he must be her child."

"And was he?" Kidder asked, carelessly.

"No, no. He told his name, and said that his mother died in France twenty-six years ago."

"His name was not the one you expected to hear?"

"No; nothing like it. I thought that he was her child, but that he would bear the name of the man who stole her away from me. The man whom I once swore that I would kill, even if I had to hunt him through all the world, and take all the years of my life for the task."

A quiet smile came over Kidder's face; he had his own ideas in regard to killing men for such uncertain pieces of property as women.

"You are sure, then, from his statements to you, that this gentleman is not the person you thought he was?"

"Yes."

"Now, my dear colonel," and Kidder laid his arm caressingly upon the shoulder of the other, "I hope you won't be offended, but, standing in the doorway yonder, I overheard all the conversation that passed between you and this young stranger, and I did what you neglected to do, kept a close watch upon his face. I feel morally certain that he has lied to you all the way through."

"The deuce you say!" said the colonel, in wonder.

"Fact! I watched his eyes, and the corners of his mouth. He exhibited a great deal more interest than a mere stranger would have taken in your questions."

"How shall I discover the truth?"

"That's a difficult question to answer, my dear colonel," Kidder said, thoughtfully. "By Jove I have it!" he cried, after a pause; "consult the fortune-teller, who has just hung out her shingle at the Bar."

"I'll be shot if I don't, sir!" cried the ex-officer.

## CHAPTER XV.

THE ORACLE.

"Yes, sir; I'll be shot if I don't consult the fortune-teller," the colonel repeated, emphatically; "not that I take much stock in any such humbug, but I'll do it just to see what she'll have to say about this affair."

"I'll go with you, colonel," Kidder said; "I want a little information myself. I've had an unusually good run of luck lately, and I'd like to see what she'd predict for the future."

One of the Johns over at Chinese camp has started a little bank, and, as a good white man, I think it's my duty to suppress gambling among the heathens, so I've been thinking about going over to the camp and breaking that bank ever since I heard it was in operation."

"What is it?—monte?"

"Yes, a monte bank."

"Let's have our breakfast first, and then we'll go for the fortune-teller."

The two adjourned to the dining-room of the Water-proof, ate their breakfast and sallied forth to consult the oracle of fate in the person of Colomba Merimee, "Fortune-teller."

The two were doomed to disappointment though, for the Chinaman who came in answer to their call informed them that the fortune-teller was absent and would not be at home until evening.

"We'll have to wait then, colonel," Kidder remarked, as they retraced their steps.

"I shall call again to-night," the colonel declared; "since I've gone so far, I will go further."

"I'm with you; we'll go after supper."

"All right; which way are you going?"

"To the hotel."

"Yes, I want to get a little sleep; I was up all last night, you know. It's really my duty as a citizen of the Bar to smash that bank at Chinese Camp," said Kidder, abruptly. "The Bar is the metropolis of the valley, and if there's to be any bank located this is the place. Those Johns and their monte bank must be bust up or we shall be ruined by Chinese cheap labor; well, good-day, colonel."

"Good-day; I'm going down to the mine."

And so the two parted.

The colonel went down to the mine by the bluff to superintend the putting up of a new dune designed to give a greater head of water, while Kidder went to the Water-proof saloon where he had his headquarters. There he threw himself on his bunk and slept for two or three hours, then got up and amused himself with a pack of cards, trying various combinations, all designed to reduce the odds of chance to a basis of certainty.

When the great red sun, sunk slowly down behind the tall white peaks of the Big-horn mountains, which fringed the western sky, and the clear waters of the Wisdom, rippling over the yellow sands of the Bar, began to cloud over with the dark shadows of the pines growing along the eastern bank of the river, the busy hum of toil from the human hive nestled by the banks of the mountain stream and in the canyons and gulches ranging from it, grew less and less. The water no longer played against the bluff-side, washing down golden-brown earth in great masses into the sluiceways and the "rockers" below. The sound of the blasting charge and the drilling pick-tearing the quartz rock from its resting-place in the mountain's side ceased.

One by one the brawny miners, hardy sons of toil, came trooping into the Bar, intent upon bartering their hard-earned gains for the toil-sweetened bread of life or patient tanglefoot whisky.

Some came to seek beneath the canvas tents or boarded shanties for the needed rest after their day of toil; others to indulge in the fascinating game of poker, or to watch the rattle of the dice at the scientific chuck-a-luck.

And, to the disgrace of the Bar, be it said—quite a large number of "pilgrims" wended their way up the stream to the Chinese Camp, all intent upon backing the Johns' monte.

News travels quickly in the mountain region, and four-and-twenty hours after the first miner retired "broke" from the monte-board, the fact that such a "bank" was running in the Chinese Camp was known in every mountain mining gulch, from Humburg Bar to Geyser Spring.

After supper, Kidder and the colonel started for the fortune-teller's shanty.

On their way thither, Kidder encountered quite a number of his acquaintances; one and all, almost without an exception, announced that they were going to take a stroll up the Wisdom as far as the Chinese Camp, "maybe."

"They'll either break that bank before I get there or else it will be so cussed strong as to oversize my pile," Kidder remarked, just as they got to the door of the shanty which bore the legend, "Colomba Merimee, Fortune-teller."

As before, the Chinaman answered the knock. This time, however, he invited the visitors to enter, in the choicest "pigeon English," as the sage who read the future was at home.

Kidder and the colonel were shown by the heathen into the main room of the shanty, and asked to sit down.

"Comme soon," the celestial said, and then retired.

A candle was burning on the table and cast its dim light over the room.

A common pine table and two chairs comprised the furniture.

"Not a particularly elegant 'lay out,' colonel," Kidder remarked, after a glance around.

"No; Spartan simplicity."

"No stuffed owls, serpents or sable hangings to prepare the minds of the unbelievers to receive the dread secrets of futurity," Kidder continued.

"No; I wonder at it too, for such mummeries generally have great effect upon the untutored mind. Imagination goes a great way in this world. Prepare a man to expect a certain result, lead him to believe that he will see it, and he'll try very hard to do so even if he don't."

"Quite correct, colonel; but I rather think this oracle of fortune who bears the romantic name of Colomba couldn't find two tougher subjects to impress with her supernatural knowledge than you and I, colonel."

"Yes; we're both in the 'sere and yellow leaf,' and in our time have seen a little of the world."

"Men wise in their own conceit sometimes fall an easy prey to the power that perchance they may despise," said a voice, close at their elbows.

Kidder and the colonel looked and beheld a woman, clad in a dark dress and closely veiled, standing by their side. She had entered so noiselessly that they had not noticed her approach.

The two men looked at the veiled woman with curiosity. She was slender in figure, and tall and straight; young too, the outlines of her figure clearly decided that.

The tone of the woman's voice astonished both the colonel and Kidder; there was a masculine ring to it; it was as if a man was striving to imitate a woman.

"Well, gentlemen, what would you with the fortune-teller?" she asked, finding that they did not speak.

Now, truth to tell, both Kidder and the colonel were a little taken aback, as a sailor would say, by the sudden and unexpected appearance of the veiled woman, and they felt just a little nettled that she should have overheard their words.

The fortune-teller had taken them at a disadvantage.

"Well, colonel, will you proceed first, or shall I?" Kidder asked.

"You first, Doc Kidder!" cried the woman, imperiously, without giving the old soldier time to reply. "I can give you all the information you require in ten minutes, while I shall have much to say to this gentleman," and with her finger she indicated the colonel as she spoke.

The two men looked at each other; the fortune-teller had succeeded in astonishing them already.

"Go ahead, Kidder, I'm in no hurry," the colonel protested.

"All right, and now Miss or madam, whichever may be your state in life," Kidder said, rising and addressing the veiled woman, who stood motionless as a statue by the table, "I propose to test your power by asking you a few questions."

"There is no necessity for you to question me," the woman remarked, sharply, and again the masculine ring came out, clear and strong.

"Oh, you can tell my thoughts then, without my putting them into words?" Kidder said, lightly, and there was a strong expression of unbelief upon his face, visible even in the dim light which pervaded the room.

"You doubt?" the fortune-teller queried, somewhat scornfully. "Listen then and be convinced. You wish to know whether you are to be lucky or unlucky; whether you will break the monte-bank just started at the Chinese Camp, or lose your own gold-dust in the attempt?"

Despite Kidder's coolness he could not prevent a slight expression of astonishment from appearing upon his face, while the colonel, less used to concealing his emotions than the practiced gamester, looked utterly astounded.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 152.)

The False Widow:  
OR,  
FLORIE REDESDALE'S FORTUNE.

BY MRS. JENNIE DAVIS BURTON,  
AUTHOR OF "ADRIA, THE ADOPTED," "GECIL'S DECEIT," "STRANGELY WED," "MADAME DULAND'S PROTEGES," ETC., ETC.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

LORELLE.

"A Little more of your side face, if you please, Miss Redesdale. That will do. These first sittings are most tedious, while you have to preserve the same attitude through the outlining. I'll try to make this posturing for a portrait as little of a torture as possible. You've no idea what a bore it gets to be after a time. To you ladies, I mean. I could go on filling in heavenly backgrounds with angelic beings at the fore through the whole term of a natural earthly existence."

"How devoted you are to your art, Mr. Kenyon."

"Well, yes; but not to this feature of it as art. I don't, and never will, excel in this branch. Strange, isn't it, how circumstances sometimes keep driving one straight out of line of the course we ought to follow?"

"And drive straight to the right end always, notwithstanding."

"Do you think so? I've been skeptical on that point, but I'm half inclined to believe at last. Now, here am I, a promising young artist, they say. Never mind how much of it I promise, yet. I'm sure to make my mark where I've made my special study,

at landscape painting. I've got out some pieces so deliciously natural, you might almost fancy you hear the breeze rustling through the leaves, stirring the shadows and dimpling the surface of the pools. The sunshine warms you, and the shades and tints are just as they should be. Now people ought to appreciate talent like that, and encourage it. Instead, they sweep it with one optic and a gold-mounted eyeglass, commenting:

"From nature? Really—aw—very sweet, I'm sure. Just as you say, my dear sir; very meritorious indeed, and it's a duty with us connoisseurs to draw out such genius as is displayed here. I must have the author of this around to paint Clotilde in her character as Amaranthe at our private theatricals." By the way, I'd like to paint you in character, Miss Redesdale."

"To encourage budding genius?"

"To gratify myself. It just struck me that you'd make a lovely Amy Robart; say in the scene where she encounters England's queen in the gardens at Kenilworth. It wouldn't do if you were one of those quailish young ladies who have presentiments, and go into spasms of superstitious horror over the fate of the unhappy Amy. I'm not going to ask you to sit for it just yet, but I may some day when I'm spurred into attempting such a piece."

"Then I shall reserve my answer until the request is made. To paint Clotilde in character—that is where you broke off, I believe."

"Yes, as a means of developing talent and patronizing the art, instead of buying the well-executed piece on exhibition, or ordering something in the same which is my line. So, because it's remunerative, I go on painting Clotildes, and leave my real talent tucked away snugly in the corner of the napkin. And that brings me to the point. Instead of working out the inspiration of silvan scenes, or wild winter landscapes—freezing my nose and stiffening my fingers in making sketches so elaborate at leisure—I am here ensconced in a room which is fitted up like a bower and—painting you."

"What an abrupt stopping-place. Did you just catch yourself in time to prevent your saying something disagreeable?—another Clotilde, for instance?"

"Ah, you know better than that. Perhaps I may tell you some day, Miss Redesdale, why I think I may be drawing near to the happiest lot I dare hope for through being here."

He was rather in the habit of making speeches of this sort, which were open to the broadest kind of inference. It was like the essence of adoration which she, in accepting, might seem to encourage, at the same time so subtly offered that she had no choice but to accept.

"In becoming famous, I presume you mean. Who knows, when that notable piece appears? Didn't you say that I in some way suggested the idea?"

"I do not mean by becoming famous, Miss Redesdale. I have said once, and I repeat it—I never shall become famous at this sort of work. Have you any curiosity to know why people persist in driving me to it?"

"Vanity, doubtless; the pleasure of seeing their features perpetuated to be regarded with reverent admiration by future generations."

"Not at all. No more than it is owing to my genius—I do claim to be a genius, contrary to all rules of modesty ascribed to the class. It sounds egotistical to say it, but it's owing entirely to the fact that I'm fortunate enough to possess a rather good-looking face, a rather glib tongue, and the facility of turning the two in making a good impression. Confess now that you rather like my style, Miss Redesdale."

"And throw fuel on the flame of your inordinate assurance? You don't expect me to do that; or is it simply following out the usual programme? Are you so frank with your fair sitters?"

"May be, in a manner. They don't generally wait for me to ask them, I believe. They pet and tease and make me a confidant at their own sweet wills, and consider me vastly honored by their preference—as of course I am. You'd never imagine what secrets of flirtation and love-affairs I have safely locked within my breast."

"My dear Miss Redesdale, how can you ask? A handsome young artist, if at all clever, is a good addition to any lady's repertoire; he can be made of avail in a hundred different ways. But he must remember his place, and stow his heart away from sight and touch. Fair ladies may condescend to flirt with him on occasions, once in a while some very youthful



say he has been treated like a lackey by those proud aristocrats who order his pictures in the same way they would order a load of coals—as a mere matter of buying and selling, only as his commodity embraces brains he is left less independence than Paddy the drayman; he is made to feel that it is purely by favor he is permitted to use them to their advantage. He must work hard, poor fellow! He looks worn—almost ill. He is gaining popularity very rapidly, mamma says, and I dare say overtakes his strength. Artists and writers and the like have so much nervous force, they never think it necessary to rest.

He laid down his brush and turned to her.

"Over at last, Miss Redesdale. Have you found it very much of a bore?"

"None whatever. You permitted me a luxurious attitude in an easy-chair and nothing to do. That suited me, for I like energy in others, and idleness for myself. Why, there is the bell for luncheon. The morning has passed quickly. Come, Mr. Kenyon, mamma will be expecting to see you, I know."

"I think—I have some engagement."

"It's not so binding but it can be broken if you're not positive regarding the fact. No excuses, sir."

"As my lady says, with a bow. 'But if I stay I shall claim the fulfillment of a promise from you. You're to favor me with your views of my picture on exhibition, you remember; let me take you to the gallery this afternoon.'"

"I'll go, with pleasure, but I never promised. I have a very tenacious memory, and you simply assumed my willingness."

"Since you are willing, I am satisfied."

The gallery was thronged that afternoon. Something new by somebody noted had just been put upon exhibition, and the crowds consequent upon such an event were drifting through. Kenyon saw how it was at a glance, and turned back at the threshold.

"Let me pilot you around by the side entrance, free to habits, and so avoid the scrambling and pushing necessary to break a way through that living barrier."

He led the way to a small door opening into a side apartment.

"This ante-room, Miss Redesdale, is filled up with merely second-class productions, the first attempts of promising genius, and the like. There is one of my own, now banished to the precincts. What hopes and what expectations I built up with that picture! Alas, 'twas all the baseless fabric of an idle dream! The canvas, once so bright in its pristine tints, has grown dingy, you see; the glowing ardor of aspiring youth has put on the 'hadden gray'—disappointment claims me for her own."

Florry imagined she detected a degree of pathos under this extravagance. It did seem pitiful that such bright aspirations, such tremulous hopes hanging by slender threads, should be ruthlessly crushed. They drew near the partitioned alcove separating this from the main hall.

"You'd scarcely believe it, Miss Redesdale, but this is one of the early productions of our lion rampant to-day. It's sure to be taken out, hung in a softened light, and sold at a fabulous price one of these times. There is the advantage of having made a name, you see."

He talked on in a modulated tone, referring to different points in the piece, and with all her senses for the moment merged into the single one of hearing, she was not heeding a single word of his.

Two men were talking on the opposite side of the curtain. It was Lynne's voice, forcible though suppressed, which first struck upon her ear.

"I tell you, Marquestone, I can't do better than that. Lord knows how you've managed to get them all in your hands, I don't! If you've any devil's play behind it, you may find it the worse for you—that's all. You'll not always have the upper hand."

"There, my dear fellow, don't get excited," answered the colonel's smooth tones. "Not the least use in the world, you see. Of course I don't want to discommodate you, and luck's sure to turn before long. Deuced lucky dog you seem to be altogether. How about that fifteen thousand a year and the little incumbency ready to flog themselves at your feet at a minute's notice?"

A quick blaze flashed into the hazel eyes, and she set her teeth as a spasm of shame and anger swept over her. That any one should dare to refer to her in that slighting way! that he should let such words be spoken and raise neither hand nor protest! Kenyon's voice recalled her.

"Take my word, Miss Redesdale. There's a horrid jam out there, but we'll escape the worst of it."

He swept back the curtain as he spoke, and Florry turned her indignant face to confront those two where they stood. She was just one second too late. Mr. Lynne and his friend, the colonel, had turned away arm-in-arm, and while she looked, the crowd closed the gap between them.

"There, now we can breathe again. That tussle has certainly brought out your latent spirit of the aggressive order. You're too flushed and animated for gentle Amy Robson, while you look like that."

"Then point me not in my headstrong moods," answered Florry, with a light laugh. "Oh, Mr. Kenyon!"

"It is my masterpiece, I think."

He drew a little aside while she studied the picture. A stretch of river scenery with a moonlit sky arching over it—a fringe of trees upon the bank, with a parti-colored leaf here and there catching the light—a little boat fantastically painted in the form of a shell drifting over the silvery sheen of the water's smooth surface. A shell bearing two female figures, the first standing upright, the hands outstretched, the face beaming as if inspired; the other kneeling, with a torrent of bright hair falling back from a childish countenance which wore an expression of rapt trustfulness, and the little white hands were clasped upon the bosom as if in prayer.

Florry put out her hand to drop it with a thrilling pressure on his arm.

"The Lorelie," said she, without removing her eyes. "And you have given the beautiful deceptive spirit my face. That is the way it appears, hulling its victim to fancied security, fascinating with its strains of song, while they drift on to the certainty of destruction ahead. And that is Isolde—dear little Isolde—kneeling there, held by that weird enchantment, never knowing that her trustfulness is leading her straight to cruel death."

An agitated pallor was upon her face and her lips were quivering with strong emotion. He had nerved himself for whatever might come, knowing how strong had been the attachment between the two girls.

"You will observe that you have been an

inspiration to me from the very first. That picture has brought such favorable notice as I have gained, and it was suggested by my first sight of you upon the night of our first meeting."

He spoke in a perfectly composed manner and with unchanged countenance, but his heart was swelled well-nigh to bursting with the wild anguish of the flooding memories called up by that fair, girlish, pictured face.

"If it should be prophetic," breathed Florry, awe and pain in her voice—"if it should! You don't know—how should you?—that my little Isolde was married secretly on that New Year's Eve after you left the school. You were gone quite away before that, but you would not have known had you been there still. It was a secret even from me—the first one of all her life Isolde would not have trusted to me. Before that night when I persuaded her to the trip upon the river, I am sure she never had a thought but all the world might have known without reproach to her; after that, something indescribable came between us, so slight at first that I never knew when it began or when it took actual form. That New Year's Eve she had permission to go out, or went without permission I had afterward reason to think, and she was married that night. I did not know it until weeks later, when she was discharged and sent away—Heaven knows where or to what fate. I have wondered until I grew sick at heart for her sake."

"You never knew whom she wedded—never suspected, nor heard surmised?"

There was an understrain of eagerness in his question which he could not repress, but she was too deeply moved to observe it.

"Never. There were the classic students at the rector's in the village, you know, and colleagues through the country about home for the holidays. It was quite impossible to fix upon any one out of the numbers presented to my mind, and I knew so little of them individually. It was not like Isolde to enter into a clandestine intimacy, as she must have done, and it has troubled me to think that my example and my urging upon that one occasion may have been the successful opening to like transgressions not known even to me. I would sacrifice much to be assured of Isolde's happiness."

In the midst of the pain tearing dumbly within his breast, Louis had a feeling of relief. He had feared that some unguarded word or half-given confidence might have led Florry to surmise something of the truth. In these past weeks since he had consented to become a party to that plot against Florry which she was so far from suspecting, a feeling of admiration which was akin to passion had sprung up within his heart.

He never could love again as he had loved Isolde. His lost Isolde! doubly, terribly lost, had she lived. His certainty of her death was a mercy in his anguish. That hope gone—and it was the only strong hope which had ever swayed him—he was ready to follow the bent of his own reckless impulses and the strong will of others who guided them.

They turned away, when suddenly Florry's clasp tightened involuntarily upon his arm.

For one second a strange face had peered forward into hers, a man's bearded face, browned by exposure, wrinkled and hardened, and the large, misty blue eyes looking from it seemed almost out of place there—eyes that to Florry seemed the exact counterpart of Isolde's own!

"Look, quick!" she whispered. "Who is that man? Did you ever see him or any one like him?"

The man had turned and was walking away, but Louis had a fair sight of him.

"A complete stranger to me," he answered. "What was it—was he impertinent?"

"Oh, no. My imagination is a little disordered, I suppose. I fancied that I detected in him a strong resemblance to Isolde."

"Effect of overworked nervous imaginings," he answered, vaguely. "Shall I take you home, Miss Redesdale?"

## CHAPTER XIX.

AN ANONYMOUS LETTER, AND AN ODD VISITOR.

Mrs. Redesdale and her daughter were breakfasting *tele-a-tele*.

The season has worn on into March by this time. It has been an unceasing round of gaiety, of balls and soirees and receptions, of opera going, shopping, dining and toilette-making—daily and nightly engagements at home or abroad since that New Year's Eve when the Redesdale mansion was thrown open, and the Redesdales—mother and daughter—had fairly launched themselves on this sparkling tide of society. How Florry had enjoyed it all! how she had danced out the nights! how she had walked and driven, made calls and received callers, through the days! how she had kept her freshness through it all! how all the gentlemen of their set had persisted in falling madly in love with her, and how the belles who were plain or *poese*, and some who were homelier, envied and maligned her! how she pursued her gay course steadily, declining the offers of hands and hearts and fortunes which beset her, but retaining the good-will of the would-be donors, and gaining friends even among her rivals as their recreant lovers drifted back to the old allegiances!

And Mrs. Redesdale was not without admirers—suitors, too, if rumor spoke truly. It was not strange. She was a handsome woman still, not young, but stately and self-possessed, and imperative enough to sway her own little circle of satellites. Colonel Marquestone gazed his mustache and watched the play with savage gloominess, and was reassured in the private interviews she granted him, and by seeing one or two who had been most importunate, drop suddenly out of her circle. The wear and tear of this society life passed on without much affecting her; she might be a little haggard of mornings, a little ennuied through the long afternoons, but under the gaslights she was always the same brilliant, queen-like creature.

The breakfast was being discussed in almost utter silence. Florry was preoccupied, for once listless and pale. It was the morning succeeding her visit to the art gallery, and the impression conveyed to her mind by the pictured Lorelie, charming her fair young victim by the sweetness of her delusive song as they floated over the deceptive smoothness of the moonlit waters, had been vivid and lasting. Isolde's face had haunted her in her dreams through the night, sorrowful and reproachful, and sadly changed. She awoke feeling unrefreshed, and the depression of the night had followed into her waking hours.

The morning mail was brought in as the silent meal drew near its close.

"Only one letter for you this morning, my dear."

Mrs. Redesdale passed it, a white oblong envelope, not monogrammed, and bearing the city postmark.

"Some tiresome invitation, I suppose," said Florry, dreading. "Excuse me, mamma. I promised to send Adele early with the last instructions regarding my dress—the bridesmaids' toilettes are only less important than the bride's own, you know."

"And Miss Day's is perfection, they say."

Mrs. Redesdale became absorbed apparently in the depths of the *Bazar*, but her black, glittering eyes shot a furtive glance away from its pages after Florry's retreating form.

"I'd like to see the effect of the tiresome invitation she supposes. But I dare say I'm as well enlightened as if she had opened it before my face. That girl has the art to perfection of concealing her emotions; her face is like a mask when she chooses."

Florry dropped the oblong envelope unopened upon her dressing-table and rung for Adele. The morrow was the wedding-day, and she was to be one of the bridesmaids. The girl received her instructions and went out; then Florry reached her hand languidly for the missive which she regarded with so little curiosity.

The change crossing her face as she glanced at its contents was slight—a shade of a frown upon her brow and an impatient curling of her lip. It was that coward's weapon—an anonymous letter.

"If Miss Redesdale would know how W. L. regards her, she had better open this envelope, let her send some friend she can trust to the address given below at any hour after eleven to-night. To avoid misapprehension, it may be well to state that this is one of the most notorious gaming dens within the city limits. Scoring is believing—even if done by proxy."

A SINCERE WELL-WISHER.

And here followed an address.

Florry crumpled the note in her hand—her first thought simply scorn of the cowardly accusation.

"It is sure to be the underhand thrust of some enemy," she thought. "A man who will not come forward to make a charge in his own proper person deserves no more attention than I shall give this."

She really intended to pass it over without the slightest observation, but she would have been less than woman had not the insidious words awakened anew that feeling of distrust with which she had before this regarded her fiancé.

"If it should be true—if Walter should care no more for his promise to me than this intimates? Is it not my duty to discover the truth?"

She smoothed out the crumpled note and read it again. She had more tolerance for the writer now; it was a cowardly part for one man to betray another, but it was done in all kind intention for her welfare. If it was a deliberate misstatement, made with the belief that she would not act upon it, and meant to instill the slow poison of distrust in her mind, it was surely her duty to prove it, so, if true. The red lips set themselves in a firm line, and a resolute light, which did not bode well for Walter Lynne in such a case, shone out of the hazel eyes.

The words she had overheard the day before, and forgotten utterly in her subsequent unrest resulting from those reminiscences Kenyon's picture had called up, and the uncertainty of her girl-friend's fate, returned now. Very heavily did they weigh in the scale against the good faith of her lover.

She dressed for walking and went out, with that crumpled anonymous note held in the clasp of her gloved fingers, under her shelter of her sable muff.

A little voiceless clock on the wall in plain sight from the cashier's desk, in the spacious room occupied by Lessingham & Co., bankers, was pointing its silent hands at twelve. The cashier, also a minor partner in the firm of which his father was principal, was then at his post. Aubrey Lessingham himself—was in his place and busy over his accounts. So busy that he did not even glance up at sound of a closing door very near him. There was a second's space of hesitation on the part of the new-comer, then a light foot crossed the floor and a shadow fell athwart the stream of sunshine which slanted over the iron railing and touched the young man's head as he stooped over his desk, changing the curling auburn hair to the red tint of Guinea gold.

Mr. Lessingham.

The cashier's pen went down and his head came up with the rapidity of startled amazement.

"Miss Redesdale, is it possible?" He could not quite repress the surprise he felt at her presence there. Her glance went over the room; the book-keeper was bending patiently at his task, quite absorbed by it, but two or three clerks at liberty for the moment were lounging about, staring at her with the nonchalance which no one but a clerk can successfully affect. The rush of the morning was over, and only employees of the firm were present, but it was clear to Florry that she could not announce the object of her mission here. Aubrey divined the cause of her momentary hesitation, and left his place instantly.

"Let me conduct you into the office, Miss Redesdale. Jackson—to his assistant—look sharp, will you? Hudson will be here at ten minutes past. This way, Miss Redesdale."

He threw back the door of an inner room, closing it upon an animated buzz among the elegant clerks.

"The Redesdale, by Jove!" ejaculated one. "Game, isn't it? What do you suppose she wants of him?"

"Got her stamps in the concern, haven't we? Wants some pin-money, maybe, and thought she'd find the judge here."

"Purest thoroughbred of the set, they say. Neat foot, wasn't it?"

"Pon honor, can't say! I only saw her face. Pure Greek, or I'm no judge."

Happily unconscious of the commotion she had caused, Florry sunk into the chair placed for her, and Aubrey stood awaiting her pleasure.

"I dare say I am breaking all the proprieties," said she, with a faint smile. "I really haven't an idea of how shocking an affair this call of mine might be construed—it is rather embarrassing business altogether. I want the service of a friend, Mr. Lessingham, and I've come to beg the favor of you."

His heart thrilled and thumped under his waistcoat with twice its usual force, and he could not prevent his voice quivering a little over her commonplace answer.

"I shall be most happy to serve you, Miss Redesdale."

"You must let me take you into my confidence, then," she continued, quietly and gravely. "Or—perhaps—hesitating, and then abruptly—he was kind enough to read this note, which I received by post a couple of hours ago."

He read it and retained it still, silently waiting.

"You understand now why I require the services of a trustworthy friend," said she. "Can I depend upon you to act for me?"

"If you wish it, Miss Redesdale. Pardon me—of course I am not in a position to judge for you—but anonymous notes are better left unregarded as a general thing."

"I believe that, but it is of very vital moment for me to know just what this one implies. The W. L. referred to is Mr. Lynne. I have a right to know if the promise he made me is lightly kept as this unknown writer intimates. Will you go to that place and learn the truth for me?"

Aubrey's muscular, well-proportioned frame straightened, and his face gloomed over with jealous apprehension.

"Miss Redesdale, is it because you love that man you would set me to dog his steps?"

From any one else Florry would have bitterly resented such an impertinence. The words coming from him, sent the hot blood leaping through her veins, and a shiver, half delight and half dread, thrilling through her frame.

"You are silent. Then it is so." There was a bitter and reproachful pathos in his voice, and for her life Florry dared not lift her eyes to meet his painfully passionate gaze. "Florry, I can not keep silence even at the price of knowing how vain and presumptuous my half-formed hopes have been. I love you—I love you, and I thought it possible I might win a return. Florry, look at me, speak to me, for the sake of heaven, if I am not utterly hopeless!"

Her face drooped and her eyes were kept resolutely averted. She could not have met his eager glance without betraying how far from indifferent she was to his pleading.

"I see how it is," he said, commanding himself with a stern effort at a moment of painful silence had passed. "Pardon my presumption, Miss Redesdale, and forget it if you can. You will let me be your friend all the same, will you not?"

"If you will, if you can be so kind."

"Then let me advise you this once." He choked a little in forcing the words, which seemed like ringing the death-knell to his own hopes. "You must know how hard it is for me, but it will be for your happiness if you love him. Let that note, with all its implied reproach, pass from your mind, as well as from an endeavor to prove or disprove its contents. An anonymous letter never merits any thing but silent contempt."

"I know the truth of all you say, but I must be assured regarding this. If you are willing to be my friend, prove it in this instance."

"Does she love him?" Aubrey asked himself. "It looks like it; but could she speak so quietly if she did? The miserable popinjay! the selfish scoundrel! He isn't half worthy of her or any noble, loving woman."

He did not speak, however, and Florry continued, a little coldly:

"I do not wish to urge you against your inclination, Mr. Lessingham. I expect you from the service which I perceive would be unwillingly rendered. I shall certainly find some one to respond to my wishes."

"You mistake! I am willing to serve you. I could do any thing for you—any thing within the bounds of honor and reason. I was only anxious to secure your happiness, and—I must repeat it—if you love Walter Lynne, it will best be done by dropping this matter here. Do you love that man, Florry?"

"Mr. Lessingham, I am engaged to marry him. I have been his betrothed wife since you saved me nearly two years ago from being his wife in reality."

"You can understand now why I require the services of a trustworthy friend," said she. "Can I depend upon you to act for me?"

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ness. There's Gerry now, good, sensible girl that she is in every thing else. I believe she never got over her liking for the scamp. What if she?—he did not allude to Gerry now—should not be quite heartbroken when she finds how little of the true ring he's got. By Jove! she's not the girl to break her heart for any man, though. What if—what if—

He broke his reflection with a speculative whistle, and went back to his desk firmly convinced that Florry was no further placed beyond his aspirations for being just now betrothed to Walter Lynne.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 149.)

## TO ADVERTISERS.

A few advertisements will be inserted on this page at the rate of 50 cents per line, newspaper measurement.

## A Terrible Foo.

TWO-HANDED MAT;  
OR,  
The Angel of the Mountains.

(BEADLE'S DIME NO



## A HEAVY COLD.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

"I'll tell you what it is, my friend, I've got a cold you see, Or, I might say in other words, A bad cold has got me.

I don't do any thing but sneeze, And then when I get through, For sake of some variety I just begin anew.

Already I have gone and sneezed The buttons from my coat, I've sneezed my solid front teeth out And down into my throat.

I've jerked my head loose from my neck, So violent is the crash, And I have shattered every pane That's in my window-sash.

I only breathe in sneezes now, Since every breath I take sneezes; My nose blows its own horn, but not With a great deal of ease.

Though not addicted to the weed, It's obvious to you, If anybody speaks to me, I answer with a "tchou!"

I've blown my handkerchief to shreds, I blow the lamps all out; It's awful on a pair of lungs Which are not very stout.

'Tis not a bad cold, but as good As any I have seen, I think the gentlest treatment would Be nitro-glycerine!

This cold's entirely too large By several degrees; I'd like to hire a good strong man To come and help me sneeze.

## The Convict's Scheme.

BY CAPT. CHARLES HOWARD.

"LILLIAN!" Rosy-cheeked and bright-eyed Lillian Dempsey turned from the deep bay window, and confronted the elderly lady who had spoken her romantic name.

"Well, aunt Susan, what is it?" she asked, in her silvery tones.

"Come here, girl."

Lillian crossed the great parlor with a smiling countenance, for she expected a lecture from her maiden aunt, concerning the duties of young ladies on the eve of marriage, as Lillian was; and she was surprised when the old lady extended the paper which she had been perusing, with the request that she should read the first paragraph on the fourth page.

Wondering what it could be, Lillian took the journal, and felt her cheeks grow pale when her gaze fell upon the caption of the particular paragraph.

"Aunt, it can not be!" she exclaimed, turning to her relative, with a fearful countenance. "That bad man can not be at large. I will not believe it!"

"Let me assure you, Lillian, of the veracity of that paragraph," replied Susan, confidently. "Anthony Doudore is at large, and we shall soon see him around in these parts."

Lillian's fragile form shook like the aspen leaf at her aunt's last sentence; but her eyes were mastering the brief paragraph, which ran as follows:

"THE NOTORIOUS DOUDORE AT LARGE!—Last night's dispatches from Auburn convey the intelligence that the notorious 'Ant.' Doudore has effected his liberation from the penitentiary. His crime is still fresh in the minds of the people of this section, and it behooves them to be on the alert for the convict, as he may make his way hither. A reward of three thousand dollars is offered for his recapture."

"Yes, aunt, we must watch for him," said Lillian, in a tone which betrayed fear. "The *Index* speaks wisely. He may come this way, for you know that he hates me: you know what he said to me as he passed me in the court-room on his way to prison."

"Yes, yes, Lillian. That was a dreadful threat, and since that hour when you told him that you would not marry him, he has been a desperate man. Girl, you might have reformed him."

For a moment Lillian Dempsey did not reply: she reread the startling paragraph, and the rose hue, which was returning to her cheeks, fled again.

"Reform Anthony Doudore!" she said, throwing a strange look into her aunt's face. "The volcano which broke from his heart that night was there when I told him 'no.' I know more about him than you, aunt Susan, and I bless the day when I refused his offer."

"Well, well; you giddy girls think that every foolish thing you do is for the best. But you rue it sometimes, and I feel that you are going to rue your words."

With this prophecy the old lady rose and left the room.

Lillian returned to the window, and buried her pretty face in the elegant lace curtains.

"Oh, if I had never met that man!" she said, and then for a brief period she lived over the past, which, with its days of excitement, burned like fire in her brain.

Anthony Doudore, the escaped convict, had encountered her at a fashionable watering place, several years prior to the opening of our story. She was a wild girl of seventeen then, and he was a handsome man of five and twenty. He soon became her companion in moonlight walks and drives along the beach, and when, one night, he brought Lillian's hand in matrimony, he was shocked to hear her lips utter a refusal. He demanded her reasons for the unexpected finale to his passionate wooing, and she calmly told him that she had learned something regarding his past life. That was enough!

Without a word, but with a look of inveterate hatred, he rose to his feet, and thus they parted.

Another man took his place—a man whom Lillian truly loved. She forgot Anthony Doudore, and he did not cross her path for a twelvemonth. Then he came with the fury of the hurricane.

One night Gerald Adams, our heroine's new lover, was shot down at her side, and Lillian recognized the assassin as he sprang from his concealment to fly. Anthony Doudore, the discarded, was found in the city, and arrested for the crime just written. He had gold, and therefore the testimony was, to no small degree, conflicting. He and his witnesses said that Gerald Adams had grossly insulted him, hence the crime. But, Lillian's testimony killed his hopes; the lawyers could not entangle her, and Anthony Doudore received a life sentence before the judicial bar!

"Stone walls shall not inclose me forever," he hissed at Lillian after the trial. "I'll pay you up for this ere long, if it takes my heart's blood!"

And now that that man was free, well might Lillian Dempsey tremble. She thought of all this at the window, and

wished that the brave man to whom she had lately given her heart was at her side. But he was far away.

"Ha! they hunt the wild bird, but they shall not catch him. He flies to the work of vengeance, and ere long Lillian Dempsey shall feel his talons."

Thus murmured a bearded man, who occupied a seat in a smoking car, which was being whirled over the road toward the city wherein a beautiful girl shuddered at the remembrance of a vow made long ago.

There was nothing about the man to denote that he was a convict. Instead of a cleanly shaven face, a long black beard fell over a snowy shirt-front, and raven locks lay lightly upon his broad shoulders.

He held a paper before his face, and, as he spoke, his dark eyes rested upon the paragraph which drove the color from Lillian Dempsey's cheeks.

Despite his lengthy locks and beard, that man was Anthony Doudore, and when the iron horse paused in the great depot of N—, he seized the leather valise, which lay at his feet, and hurried from the train.

No one scrutinized him, and, with the boldness ever characteristic of the man, he read the posters which offered three thousand dollars for his arrest, before he left the station.

"I wonder if she will come," he murmured, as he walked down the spacious apartment. "That dispatch will surely deceive her, for he was in the city when I left—yes, yes, I feel that she will come."

Anthony Doudore was already playing for vengeance on the fair girl who had sent him to Sing Sing, to pay the awful penalty attached to crime in the horrors of a life-long incarceration. From the prison he had hastened to New York, and while hidden from the detectives, by companions in crime, he had learned much about Lillian's life since the trial. He knew that she was on the eve of marriage, and one day he accidentally encountered her betrothed on the street.



THE CONVICT'S SCHEME.

Instantly an audacious plot entered his brain. He hurried to a telegraph station, and sent the following dispatch to Lillian:

"Will reach N— on the 9:40 train. May I meet you at the depot?"

MAX.

He felt assured that Lillian would hasten to the station to meet her lover, and he went down on an early train.

The coming of night proved the surmises of the villain correct. Lillian hailed a hack, which, strange to say, had taken up its station near her home, and ordered the black Jehu to drive her to the depot. The man's "Yes, missus" urged the horses forward, and as Lillian settled back among the cushions she did not see the burly form that clambered to the driver's seat, and spoke to him in low tones.

The carriage rattled on for an hour, and Lillian's cheeks paled with fear. The station was near her home, and she should have been there long since.

Terribly fearful, she raised the carriage sash, and commanded the driver to halt.

He paid no attention whatever to her voice.

A moment later she spoke again, and all at once the carriage stopped.

The door flew open, and a pair of long arms encircled Lillian's body. She tried to shriek, but a hand closed over her mouth, and she was dragged from the vehicle. Then she found herself carried swiftly away, and the closing of a door told her that she was beneath a roof. Up a flight of steps the man hurried, and when Lillian was placed on her feet, she shrunk from the bearded face so near her own pale cheeks.

"Ha! I said we would meet again!" the man hissed. "Have I lied, Miss Lillian Dempsey? I am Anthony Doudore. I know you recognize my voice. You are mine now—mine, mine! That's the sweetest word I ever uttered."

A shriek from Lillian's heart told the convict that she had recognized him, and, with an oath, he turned on his heel, and left her alone.

The villain's plot had been crowned with success, and the woman whose life he would blight was completely in his power. Poor Lillian Dempsey! In a murderer's clutches, and so near her wedding-eve, too!

Three days passed away, and no tidings of Lillian's whereabouts came to the inmates of her father's house. The fashionable avenue—the whole city—was excited, and the police were busy with the mysterious case. Walker Dorsey, Lillian's lover, returned, ignorant of the fatal dispatch accredited to him. This increased the *furor*, and the hours passed without a gleam of intelligence regarding the missing girl.

The black-bearded man had suddenly disappeared, and news came that he was

Anthony Doudore, when it was too late to apprehend him.

One night a man might have been seen in the most degraded portion of the city, dogging the footsteps of another.

The watcher wore the countenance of Walker Dorsey, nicknamed "Max," from a youthful *nom de plume*, and he kept his eyes on his prey.

Suddenly the dogged one darted down an alley, and Dorsey hastened forward. He gained the dark mouth of the way, when the man confronted him.

"Dogging me, eh?" he cried. "T'll stop this forever!" and with the agility of a tiger, he darted upon the young man.

For a moment the blade flashed in the starlight, and then it was buried in Dorsey's breast!

He fell back with a shriek, and the assassin turned to fly. But, before he could penetrate the gloom, a pistol cracked, and he fell to the earth.

A minute later two policemen bent over him. As they raised him, his gray beard dropped from his face, and the guardians of the city started back, exclaiming:

"Anthony Doudore!"

The convict's arrest spread like wildfire. An infuriated crowd assembled—a crowd that would not listen to reason.

They tore the wounded convict from the police, and in the twinkling of an eye, he was dangling from the sturdy limb of an umbrageous elm!

And when it was too late, the mob thought of Lillian Dempsey's fate. They might have wrung it from the convict; but now his tongue was silent!

The city clocks were proclaiming the hour of six, the morning following the work of the mob, when three women entered the room wherein lay the corpse of the convict.

They were inmates of the house to which the body had been brought, and placed in a plain coffin, and they had once been the friends of the wicked dead.

that had you seen her watching Mr. Caverder with those drooping-lidded eyes, whose flashing beauty had more than once stirred his heart most curiously.

Lovers Imogene had had, ever since she wore short dresses, and chivalrous school-boys contended for the honor of riding her on their sleds; lovers who had adored her, but never yet one who had as much as created the faintest wish in her heart that she might love them.

Of course Imo had many offers, but of them all, no rejected suitor could say she led them on to scorn them at last. She refused their love, refused them hers in such a kind, matter-of-fact way that they felt honored that they ever cared for her at all.

This afternoon, with the train of gray poplin dress sweeping around her, and a brilliant-hued India shawl wrapped tightly around her shoulders, a jaunty little hat, trimmed with a scarlet wing and gray velvet, on her purple-black hair, Imogene was listening to Howard Caverder with an interest she had never felt before, either in his conversation or any one else's.

What constituted the charm she was trying to find out? Was it his grave earnestness, even when speaking of commonplace affairs? his utter forgetfulness of self in all he said or did, or the rare sweetness of temper that pervaded every word and gesture?

Imogene was wondering what it was, when he turned to her his bright face, lighted by such keen, intelligent eyes.

"Miss Glendaun, I am afraid I am trespassing too long on your time. I had no idea it was so late, and you will want to dress for the hop. It is the last of the season, is it not?"

"The last. And I am not sorry, Mr. Caverder, to quit all the gayety and gossip of hotel life, and settle down quietly for the winter."

He smiled in her eyes.

"Quietly for the winter? Miss Glendaun, your life this coming winter will be far

self, and no one noticed the nearer approach of the tall, black domino.

"You never heard about it, Mame, because your house is a distance from Miss Glendaun's, and mine within a mile, you know. Well—but don't any of you tell I repeated it—Miss Glendaun stole that dress she has on." A united exclamation of surprise came from behind the masques.

"It seems incredible, I know, and perhaps some people wouldn't call it stealing; but papa and mamma think it was, and of course I think so."

"Do tell it, Josie, before the music sounds for the Lancers."

Howard Caverder changed his position to one very near Miss "Josie."

"You see the dress is very elegant and expensive; mamma says it must have cost at least two hundred dollars, for the lace on the ruffles is real Valenciennes. Miss Glendaun ordered it of a young lady who made such dresses, and gave her *carte blanche* as to style and trimmings, and wanted it done by the thirtieth. Of course the dressmaker was delighted with the opportunity of realizing a little profit, so she made every effort to have the dress handsome and stylish; indeed, she said she borrowed seventy dollars to buy some trimmings she hadn't."

"Then when she took the dress up to Miss Glendaun, the lady refused to pay her, on the ground that it was a day after the contract; she might take back the dress; Miss Glendaun was displeased because she was disappointed. Of course the dressmaker could not afford to have the dress thrown on her hands, and she was obliged to leave it, trusting to that lady relenting and keeping the dress, which she has done, and refuses still to pay the required amount, on the ground of delay in its receipt. There comes Max after you, Mame, for the Lancers."

And in a second the little group was scattered here and there, and only Howard Caverder stood alone, to wonder what it all meant. Was it true? *could it be true*, that Imogene Glendaun was so utterly devoid of womanly principle?

He saw her every few minutes with her fleecy white dress gleaming among darker garments; he saw the sweet graciousness of her manners, and a pain of something keener than mere disappointment trembled around his heart.

He had no desire to dance now, not even with her, for that elegant dress would be constantly suggesting something to him. He was already tired of the lights and the crashing music, so he slowly went out through the crowd to the cool night air. On the threshold he met her, leaning on the arm of a swarthy-browed man; and then and there Howard Caverder awoke from the brief, sweet dream.

"I must have more money, Rob. This one I am telling you of is well off, and if I can manage him—"

Then the voice of Imogene Glendaun passed from his hearing, and he never heard it again; but by her own lips she had proclaimed herself an adventuress.

## Short Stories from History.

## Old Legends of the New World.

There is, however, a later manuscript than that indicated in our last week's paper, regarding the voyage of the Danes down the North American coast, in the tenth and eleventh centuries. This second narrative differs in many points from the story before mentioned.

It is full of the most marvelous impossibilities; but its authority has been placed very high by several Danish and American writers. In truth, it has been sustained by the discovery of Norse remains in America, which are found in sufficient quantities to supply the archaeological demand. Mr. Longfellow immortalized in one of his ballads the windmill at Newport, Rhode Island, which the Danes have claimed as the Round Tower, built by some of the Greenland wanderers. The story of the lower and of "the Viking bold" is, as he says, sufficiently well established for the purposes of a ballad; though doubtless many an honest citizen, who has passed his days within sight of the Round Tower, will exclaim with Sancho, "God bless me! did I not warn you to have a care, for that it was nothing but a windmill, and nobody could mistake it who had not the like in his head?"

Besides the mill, there was found a stone in the Taumton River on which the fragment of a Runic inscription was imagined to have been discovered, concerning which some passable jokes may be read in the "Biglow Papers."

The crew, whose adventures are recorded in the later saga, are said to have sailed from Greenland to the sandy shores previously discovered, and there to have sent a Scotch man and woman, "fleece than wild beasts," to explore the inland parts, who returned in three days with grapes and an ear of wheat. Then they found an island with nesting elder ducks, which some will have to be Egg Island, near Newport. Here they passed the winter, some of the crew parting company in disgust, "at not having tasted a drop of wine," and being eventually wrecked on the coast of Ireland. The others went to exploring to the southward, until they arrived at the river and lake which the first body of settlers had discovered; and here they saw the vines, and fields of corn, but were driven away by the Esquimaux, who attacked them with a fleet of skin canoes. On their northward journey they met a Uniped, or One-foot man, "of glittering appearance," who shot a Greenland captain, and ran away across the sea. Avoiding the region of the One-foot men, they proceeded north; but, by a sudden turn of the legend, we find them passing a third winter upon the Island of Eggs, where Snorro Thorfinnson was born, who has been claimed as an ancestor by the sculptor Thorvaldsen, Prof. Finn Magnusen, and other distinguished persons. To make the story short, the wanderers sailed home from Vineland the Fair with some Esquimaux children whom they had captured. From these children they learned of the Esquimaux king, Arvidamon Valdidda, and of tribes who lived in holes underground; and the same children are the same authority for the processions of chanting priests in the Great Ireland, in which, as we have said, Humboldt was inclined to believe.

However absurd it may seem to discuss the details of this story, there is not a rock or a bay mentioned in it which has not been identified by learned enthusiasts; and it is a remarkable thing that even the most trivial names of places mentioned in the saga are found to have remained in use unaltered to the present day.

## The White Suisse Dress.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

THE golden arrows of the sunset were resting on the far-spreading branches of the linden tree, and, gleaming between the swaying leaves, just touched the proud head of Imogene Glendaun, as she stood there, a fit subject for poet, painter or sculptor. One could scarce imagine a more perfect face than hers, just now turned toward Howard Caverder, as he called her attention to the rare brilliance of the sunset; a face that few men, seeing once, would ever forget; a face, whose large, magnificent eyes, so lustrous, so shadowy, so grave, so gay, no lover of Imogene's could have told the color of.

She was a flirt; you would have known

from quiet, I am thinking. What think you of a home away in a remote town on the Western frontier, where a fashionable ball has not been heard of these ten years?"

Imo shrugged her shoulders.

"I'll not like it, I think. Oh, Mr. Caverder, you've not asked me what I shall wear to the masquerade, to-night?"

She flashed the full beauty of her wondrous eyes upon him.

"Am I to be so honored? How can I thank you?"

His voice was in that low, earnest key that had of late struck sympathetic chords in this woman's heart.

"How?" she repeated, quickly. "By being there early as ten, at least, and reporting to a white suisse dress."

She laughed as she spoke, and drew out her jeweled watch.

"Mr. Caverder, it is actually six o'clock, and the gong will sound for dinner before we reach the hotel."

She just rested the tips of her gray kid-d-fingers on his sleeve as they walked up the broad path; and Howard Caverder, as he felt the light, fairy touch, knew by the thrills of delight that surged over him, that he loved her—this girl who was invulnerable, she said; this girl who had been loved by others before him—yes, and who had rejected him as good as he, who had loved her as well, doubtless, as he did. Would she reject him?

He asked himself the question as he glanced down at her; and then, when she smiled him adieu at the entrance, Howard Caverder resolved to ask her to marry him; that same night he would woo and win, if he could, the white suisse dress, and what it held within its fleecy folds.

The ball-room was one blaze of flaming lights; the gay crowd was promeneading the floor to the low, sweet tones of music, when Howard Caverder, in simple domino, entered one of the side doors to find Miss Glendaun.

He had never before gone anywhere with such peculiarly pleasant anticipations as to this masquerade; he had gone, thinking of no one in the world but beautiful Imogene, whom he would ask for his own.

So, when, among a group of Italian peasant girls, he heard a voice pronounce the name of "Miss Glendaun," very naturally he listened, eagerly.

"I would know her by her hair, anyhow, wouldn't you, Mame? But, that white suisse dress is enough of itself to proclaim its wearer Miss Imogene Glendaun."

"Why, what about the dress? I never have heard."

Howard Caverder heard the curiosity in the girl's voice; he felt fully as curious him-